

Independent Evaluation Report

ActionAid's DEC phase 1 response to drought in East Africa in 2017

May 2018



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**DISASTERS
EMERGENCY
COMMITTEE**

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Lizzie Fletcher-Wood and Roy Mutandwa

Cover image: ActionAid's partner organisation prepares for a distribution of humanitarian assistance in Somaliland (ActionAid).

Executive summary

As a result of the severe drought in East Africa in 2016 and 2017, ActionAid launched a humanitarian response in Kenya, Somaliland and Ethiopia in late 2016/early 2017. The response initially utilised relatively small-scale funds from DPRF (Disaster Preparedness Response Funds), as well as country level unrestricted funds. However, in Kenya and Somaliland, the assistance was significantly scaled up into a phase 1 response in mid-March until September 2017, with an appeals budget of £657,874 from the DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee)¹. The assistance reached 94,301 unique beneficiaries in Kenya and 35,940 in Somaliland.

From 1998 to date, devastating droughts have been persistent in Kenya and Somaliland to the level of being declared national disasters. For example, in Kenya the indications of an impending drought began in 2016 when, at the end of 2016, the short rains failed. The counties in the northwest and southeast being particularly badly hit, with the drought threatening health and local food security². At the end of 2016, with UNICEF reporting a significant increase in severe acute malnutrition. Nearly 110,000 children under-five were in need of treatment (up from 75,300 in August 2016)³. Waterholes and rivers had also dried up, leading to widespread crop failure, livestock and milk depletion, pressure on pasture lands and food price rises⁴. By February 2017, the number of food insecure people increased from 1.3 million to 2.7 million, with 357,285 children and pregnant and lactating women being acutely malnourished⁵. An assessment conducted in February 2017 by UNICEF showed that 175,000 children were not attending pre-primary & primary schools, primarily due to the drought⁶.

Somaliland, which lies in an arid and semi-arid environment, frequently experiences recurrent episodes of drought that have become a serious natural hazard. Drought affects large proportion of the population in a number of ways such as causing loss of life, crop failures, health problems, mass migration and food shortages that might lead to malnutrition⁷. Several regions of Somaliland had experienced below average rainfall and extensive drought since 2015 increasing the number of food insecure, which had spilt over into 2016. In late 2016 the short 'Deyr' rains were again largely below average. Following severe water shortages and lack of pasture in the affected areas, unusually high levels of migration were observed from Sanaag region to coastal areas, indicating that populations were moving with their livestock to search for pasture and water. In early 2016 the government of Somaliland declared a drought emergency and launched an appeal, which was revised several times throughout the year. In February 2017, a further revision of a Government's emergency appeal was made to support 78,990 beneficiaries (13,165 households), following the worsening situation⁸.

¹ DEC – Disasters Emergency Committee <www.dec.org.uk>.

² Climate and Development Knowledge Network and World Weather Attribution Initiative 'The drought in Kenya 2016-17' <<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/The-drought-in-Kenya-2016-2017.pdf>>.

³ Chatterjee S, United Nations Resident Coordinator and the UNDP Resident Representative in Kenya 'Kenya's Drought: Response Must be Sustainable, Not Piecemeal' <<https://reliefweb.int/report/kenya/kenya-s-drought-response-must-be-sustainable-not-piecemeal>> consulted January 2018.

⁴ Chatterjee S, United Nations Resident Coordinator and the UNDP Resident Representative in Kenya 'Kenya's Drought: Response Must be Sustainable, Not Piecemeal' <<https://reliefweb.int/report/kenya/kenya-s-drought-response-must-be-sustainable-not-piecemeal>> consulted January 2018.

⁵ FEWSNET 'Atypical high food insecurity expected through September; Feb – Sept 17' <www.fews.net/east-africa/kenya/food-security-outlook/february-2017>.

⁶ Data collected by UNICEF reported in 'Horn of Africa: A Call for Action, February 2017' <<https://reliefweb.int/node/1906393>>.

⁷ Abdulkadir G, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2017) Assessment of Drought Recurrence in Somaliland: Causes, Impacts and Mitigations. April.

⁸ IFRC 'Emergency Plan of Action operation update. Drought, 13 February 2017. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/MDRSO000505ou_0.pdf>.

In response to these challenges and early warning systems, ActionAid's 6-month DEC phase 1 scaled-up response was launched in mid-March 2017 and ran until the end of September 2017. The response focused on several core outcome areas in response to the challenges identified, which are listed below.

1. Improved food access for vulnerable drought affected households.
2. Increase water access through water provision and storage solutions.
3. Improved access to basic needs assistance for extremely vulnerable (Somaliland).
4. Improved safety, dignity and reduced risk of GBV for women and girls.
5. Improved accountability to vulnerable drought affected people.
6. Malnourished children under 5, pregnant and lactating women receiving life-saving support (Kenya only through partnership with AAH) (Baringo only)

Following the phase 1 response, an independent evaluation was launched. Normally DEC evaluations are scheduled for the end of phase 2 responses but as ActionAid allocated a large majority of DEC funding to phase 1, given the scale of need, an exception was made. The evaluation had the purpose of providing accountability to the DEC, its stakeholders (including the communities affected by the crisis) and donors as to the effectiveness or otherwise of the funds spent. It also aimed to provide ActionAid and partners with recommendations and learning for future responses.



'Community members dividing the food rations amongst themselves in Baringo county, Kenya'

The evaluation took an in-depth qualitative approach and utilised a relatively large number of focus group discussions and key informant interviews within multiple communities and other key stakeholders. In total 44 focus group discussions were conducted with communities separately with men and women, with an average of 10 participants per group, with additional discussions and held with other groups engaged in the response. This was complimented by quantitative methods such as seasonal timelines and ranking of impact, to assist with the analysis of impact of the humanitarian response. In the context of a drought crisis and rural livelihoods these tools have also enabled the development of recommendations that are specific to the seasonal calendar (such as identifying trends of coping mechanisms in periods of drought and opportunities for building resilience). In addition to the FGDs, a total of 13 KIIs were conducted with key stakeholders in the programme.

Executive summary

ActionAid's DEC phase 1 response included five counties in Kenya and three regions in Somaliland. The evaluation sampled three of the five counties in Kenya and two of the three regions in Somaliland. These locations were selected as they provided a broad geographic scope, with the potential to enable a good range of findings in each response context. The evaluation was also based on several core evaluation questions, as well as being based in the framework of the Core Humanitarian Standard⁹, complemented by the OECD DAC evaluation standards¹⁰. These standards have been grouped into several quality areas providing the framework for the report; relevance and timeliness, impact and effectiveness, accountability, resource management, resilience and sustainability and a gender analysis.

In terms of the main findings, the evaluation found that ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature¹¹ had underpinned the response, guiding the overall approach, especially in terms of shifting the power to women. This was mainly through ActionAid's model of enabling Women's Networks to lead and deliver the humanitarian assistance.

Especially in Kenya, the majority of discussions with the affected communities said that they believed the assistance arrived at the right time – although most of these same groups said that they were in a desperate situation in the months before this. Further to this, it was definitively reported by around a third of the FGDs that impact would have increased if some areas of assistance could have taken place earlier from January 2017, such as the food assistance and destocking of livestock before they became too weak. This may have been possible to assess as the short rains at the end of 2016 were predicted to be below average or fail across the region.

Further to this, the response was launched in line with external early warning systems, especially in Kenya, such as the IPC food security classifications by FEWSNET¹². Timeliness could be reviewed in more detail to see if humanitarian assistance could have been scaled-up earlier. At the same time, the timing of when to launch a response can depend on multiple factors that may be out of the control of implementing agencies.

When looking at response effectiveness and impact, the evaluation found that all but one of the many planned outputs within the outcome areas were met or exceeded. In addition, the two greatest areas of impact of the response was the food and water assistance. The main trend, according to the communities included in the evaluation and other stakeholders, was that food distributions had meant alleviation of hunger and food insecurity, with potentially vulnerable groups such as children and pregnant and lactating women particularly impacted. The evaluation also concluded that the distribution of food to schools had increased attendance rates by 19% in a sample of nine schools in Kenya, with this finding triangulated with communities, partners and head teachers.

⁹ Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) 'The Standard' <<https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/the-standard>> consulted December 2017.

¹⁰ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 'Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance' <www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

¹¹ Action Aid's Humanitarian Signature can be found in our Emergency Preparedness and Response Handbook <<http://eprhandbook.actionaid.org/>>. In summary, ActionAid aims for humanitarian responses to: actively promote women's leadership and the role of women in the response; shift power to communities, partners and local intuitions; and to promote accountability to affected communities.

¹² Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) <www.fews.net>

There were no problems reported with access to the assistance by men or women and ActionAid and the partner organisations/Women's Networks ensured that the distributions were conducted at designated safe spaces, also led by the partner organisations.

Although several communities noted that there were still many households in need of assistance in their communities and expressed in the FGDs that the assistance could be expanded to cover more households – this was particularly the case in Somaliland.

Further to this, due to ActionAid's longstanding work with communities throughout East Africa, ActionAid had extensive knowledge about the protection risks and concerns faced within communities. The phase 1 response aimed to develop community based protection mechanisms through the training of women based in Women's Networks and from the general community. One of the main effects of the training was that the women shared their knowledge with other women, who then went on to raise awareness in the communities in women's rights and risks such as GBV and FGM. When communities were asked during the evaluation about the impacts of the protection services, several main trends were reported by women trained in protection services and other members of the communities. These related to men starting to shift their thinking about women's leadership and being more accepting of women making decisions at the household and community level. Also, two of the FGD groups in Kenya talked about how they are seeing changes in attitudes towards FGM, whereas previously men tended to want FGM to have taken place before they would marry, this attitude was starting to change. However, the relatively low level of referrals following reports of GBV in Somaliland during the response period indicates that there are still cultural norms preventing women from reporting incidences such as GBV and being referred.

When considering how accountable the response was to the affected populations, ActionAid and the partners also ensured that transparency boards were placed in each locality to communicate key information about the response and the assistance. In terms of feedback and complaints mechanisms, the evaluation noted that the main mechanism of reporting any feedback and complaints about the response was to the partner organisation, who were leading on the response delivery in the different communities. The key informant interviews with the partner organisation showed that they were indeed dedicated and motivated to assist individuals with specific issues and were available in communities either in person or by telephone. However it was also noted by the evaluation that there was a need to formalise the complaints/feedback reporting and recording processes.

In terms of relevance, ActionAid Kenya and ActionAid Somaliland have demonstrated that decisions about what to prioritise in terms of the response activities were based on evidence from a range of sources. This prioritised the communities affected by the crisis, as well as government departments, relevant forums and UN agencies. ActionAid was also flexible to respond to spikes of needs during the response (enabled by feedback about the situation by partner organisations and other actors), such as malnutrition and cholera outbreaks. ActionAid was able to respond to these in coordination with other actors, such as UNICEF. Further to this, a key and valued approach of ActionAid is to include input from communities into the main needs and selection of vulnerable households, in conjunction with the partner organisations, committees and local leaders. Although most focus group discussions revealed that communities were satisfied with the input they had given, several FGDs with affected communities in Kenya and Somaliland said they would like to give more detailed input into the response design and the identification of the most vulnerable households – and directly to ActionAid if possible.

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Although this approach of engaging communities in response design, combined with the rapid needs assessments that were carried out, provided valuable information about how to implement the assistance and reach the most vulnerable, baseline studies carried out shortly after rapid needs assessments that include surveys with communities and other stakeholders have the potential to capture more detailed and disaggregated input. Data such as this also has the potential to be coordinated and collected on a multi-agency basis to improve resource efficiency and scope, including the different partner organisations, local government agencies, sector working groups and other forums. The results could then be used to further inform the beneficiary selection in conjunction with community leaders and community committees as their inclusion and leadership is critical, as already demonstrated by ActionAid.

Following this, it is recommended to develop critical and priority indicators collected with data disaggregated by gender, age and other groups, including vulnerable groups, also noted by ActionAid Kenya to the evaluation team during the evaluation. For example, malnutrition levels, food security scores, community coping mechanisms, vegetation condition indices, migration, displacement, number of IDPs, knowledge and attitudes towards protection risks, resource based conflicts, protection indicators and education indicators¹³. Collecting such data with communities (and IDP camps) in key outcome areas could be used to further support the development of planned outcomes. The post distribution monitoring surveys (PDM), which demonstrated their high level of value in the phase 1 response, could be used as an additional tool to monitor the priority indicators. If a standardised sampling methodology is used, this would further enable the comparability of results over time. The combination of the external early warning systems, combined with monitoring and evaluation of programme indicators, would provide a powerful information tool for slow onset disasters that includes the voices of affected communities and other key stakeholders.

ActionAid's DEC phase 1 emergency response to the drought in East Africa has prioritised responding to urgent needs in the areas of food security, WASH, NFIs, protection and accountability and impact. Impact and quality in these areas has been demonstrated during the evaluation. Taking into account these successes and the feedback from the communities and other stakeholders about the future of those affected by drought, emergency humanitarian assistance should still be anticipated, monitored and provided for vulnerable households and communities. However, building on the integration of resilience programming into ActionAid's body of work would reduce the vulnerability of communities (including IDPs) to climatic shocks, which are reported to be increasing in frequency in the region. Resilience programming needs such as these was a key trend reported by communities and other stakeholders during the evaluation.

There were also elements of the phase 1 response that were highly sustainable in nature due to being knowledge based, which had a demonstrated impact. For example, training women in protection services and women's rights, who then go on to train other women and raise awareness at events. In addition, for the communities that had contact with decision makers such as local government structures, it was community committees that were the catalyst for this, so reinforcing these and building on the participatory review and reflection processes (PRRP) model is key. These elements should continue to be entwined in humanitarian (and resilience) programmes, especially as they are in the framework of ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature and approach. Other connected challenges or consequences include increasing instability, displacement, issues with access to pasture and resources, reductions in school attendance, lack of access to health services, and protection risks. Many of these areas are already being addressed by ActionAid as they have shown that they undermine efforts to build resilience and reduce vulnerability to disasters. Therefore, strategies to address these should continue to be included in programme design, as feasible by ActionAid or in coordination with other agencies.

¹³ ActionAid Kenya (2017) DEC phase 1 final report. October.

This report details findings and evidence in all these areas and also provides a list of recommendations for consideration by ActionAid and the DEC.

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Annexes

Annexes (attached to the report in a separate document)

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Annex J: Key informant interview tool; National Drought Management Authority (Kenya)

Acronyms

AAH	Action Against Hunger
CHS	Core Humanitarian Standard
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DEC	Disasters Emergency Committee
UK DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
EWS	Early Warning System
FEWSNET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GHACOF	Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification.
IDP	Internally Displaced People
NDMA	National Drought Management Authority
NFI	Non-Food Item
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Introduction

ActionAid's DEC East Africa Response

As a result of the severe drought in East Africa in 2016 and 2017, ActionAid launched a humanitarian response in Kenya, Somaliland and Ethiopia. The response, which was launched in in late 2016/early 2017, initially utilised funds from DPRF (Disaster Preparedness Response Funds), as well as country level unrestricted funds. However, the assistance was significantly scaled up in Kenya and Somaliland with an appeals budget of £657,874 from the DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee), which works with leading UK aid agencies to raise money at times of humanitarian crisis¹⁴. The initial 6-month DEC phase 1 response ran from mid-March to the end of September 2017.

The locations included in the response were Baringo, West Pokot, Garissa, Isiolo and Kilifi counties in Kenya and Sanaag, Togdheer and Woqooyi Galbeed regions in Somaliland. These are highlighted in maps 1 and 2. The evaluation included a selection of these areas as described in the methodology section. This evaluation focuses on ActionAid's DEC response

in Kenya and Somaliland. The emergency programme focused on several core outcome areas in response to the challenges identified in the initial needs assessment and other research, which are listed in Box 1. Within each outcome are specific outputs and activities that are detailed in this report.

Box 1: Outcome areas, objects and indicators for ActionAid's DEC emergency response

1. Improved food access for vulnerable drought affected households.
2. Increase water access through water provision and storage solutions.
3. Improved access to basic needs assistance for extremely vulnerable (Somaliland).
4. Improved safety, dignity and reduced risk of GBV for women and girls.
5. Improved accountability to vulnerable drought affected people.
6. Malnourished children under 5, pregnant and lactating women receiving life-saving support (Kenya only through partnership with AAH) (Baringo only)

In addition to these outcomes, ActionAid's emergency responses are guided by a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA), which acknowledges that people affected by crises and emergencies have the right to assistance; both immediate lifesaving support which meet basic needs whilst also working to address underlying inequalities and promote long-term change. This rights-based approach promotes the leadership, engagement and agency of poor and excluded people, particularly women, ensuring they are at the centre of emergency response.

ActionAid also commits to a Humanitarian Signature, which provides a framework to promote women's leadership, shift power to local organisations, build sustainability and resistance and also improve accountability for affected communities¹⁵. The emergency response to the drought in East Africa demonstrated active support to these commitments in ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature. For example, many of the response activities, such as food distributions and protection services, were delivered by partner organisations in each county or region of Kenya and Somaliland. ActionAid supported the partners, usually Women's Networks, Disaster Management Committees or other grassroots organisations, by providing technical support in the activities they were implementing and

¹⁴ DEC – Disasters Emergency Committee <www.dec.org.uk>.

¹⁵ Terms of Reference for the external evaluation of 'ActionAid's phase 1 DEC East Africa Response'.

This also included ensuring that technical standards such as the Sphere standards and the Core Humanitarian Standard were applied by the partners.

One of the main reasons for the focus on working with partner organisations in this way is because they are embedded in the communities affected by the emergency. This was crucial from the perspective of accountability and also shifting the balance of power to organisations in communities that could design and lead the response. It is also a key strategy in shifting the power to women as the partner organisations are often led by women – especially in Kenya. ActionAid also connected the partner organisations to local government structures where they could communicate the priorities and needs of the communities affected by the drought.

Further to this, the response supported the aims of the Localisation Agenda, which humanitarian organisations committed to at the first World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in 2016. The central drive behind this agenda is transforming the international humanitarian system to one where national and local actors are at the forefront and lead humanitarian response. Capacity building with partners is integral to this, enabling people in communities to move more fluidly into response mode. In addition, ActionAid works with women-led organisations and one of the drivers for this was another commitment at the WHS - that at least 50% of humanitarian workers should be women by 2020, as well as working with more women-led organisations¹⁶.

¹⁶ Key informant interview with ActionAid International.

Context analysis

Kenya

From 1998 to date, devastating droughts have been persistent in Kenya to the level of being declared national disasters. Arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs) account for more than 70% of Kenya's total land area, supporting an increasing population of both humans and animals. Drought events translate into severe soil moisture deficits, far below crop and pasture water requirements. A look at previous droughts in Kenya seems to suggest that drought should be expected at least every four years¹⁷.

More recently, the indications of an impending drought in Kenya began in 2016. Kenya receives the majority of its rainfall during two periods; the 'long rains' during March, April and May and the 'short rains' during October, November and December. However, at the end of 2016 the short rains failed, with counties in the northwest and southeast being particularly badly hit. The southeast also suffered from poor long rains in 2016. This drought has threatened health and local food security¹⁸.

Following this, food security in Kenya deteriorated significantly at the end of 2016¹⁹, with UNICEF reporting a significant increase in severe acute malnutrition. Nearly 110,000 children under-five were in need of treatment, up from 75,300 in August 2016. In Kenya, up to 3.4 million people were (and still are) going hungry - in general, the areas of Kenya that experience the worst effects of drought also face entrenched poverty and intermittent conflict²⁰. Waterholes and rivers had also dried up, leading to widespread crop failure and livestock depletion. From the end of 2015 to the end of 2016, the price of maize flour rose by 31%, milk by 12% and sugar by 21%. In addition, livestock and milk production declined adversely - malnutrition became widespread among children²¹.

In Kenya the number of food insecure people increased from 1.3 million to 2.7 million by February 2017. Approx. 357,285 children and pregnant and lactating mothers are acutely malnourished²². By February approx. An assessment conducted in February by UNICEF showed that 175,000 children were not attending pre-primary & primary schools, primarily due to the drought²³. Five counties where ActionAid already had programmes in place, and were to become the counties included in the DEC phase 1 response, had an Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) of between 1 and 3 at that time. IPC is a classification system related to food insecurity by the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET). IPC 1 is considered to be 'minimal' food insecurity, IPC 2 is considered to be 'stressed' and IPC 3 is considered to be 'crisis'.

¹⁷ Mburu J, Waswa F (2006) Potential of Dryland Farming in Kenya and Environmental Implications <<http://ir-library.ku.ac.ke/bitstream/handle/123456789/12571/Potential%20of%20Dryland%20Farming%20in%20Kenya....pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>>.

¹⁸ Climate and Development Knowledge Network and World Weather Attribution Initiative 'The drought in Kenya 2016-17' <<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/The-drought-in-Kenya-2016-2017.pdf>>.

¹⁹ Chatterjee S, United Nations Resident Coordinator and the UNDP Resident Representative in Kenya 'Kenya's Drought: Response Must be Sustainable, Not Piecemeal' <<https://reliefweb.int/report/kenya/kenya-s-drought-response-must-be-sustainable-not-piecemeal>> consulted January 2018.

²⁰ DEC – Disasters Emergency Committee, Widespread food insecurity continues in East Africa <www.dec.org.uk>.

²¹ Chatterjee S, United Nations Resident Coordinator and the UNDP Resident Representative in Kenya 'Kenya's Drought: Response Must be Sustainable, Not Piecemeal' <<https://reliefweb.int/report/kenya/kenya-s-drought-response-must-be-sustainable-not-piecemeal>> consulted January 2018.

²² FEWSNET 'Atypical high food insecurity expected through September; Feb – Sept 17' <www.fews.net/east-africa/kenya/food-security-outlook/february-2017>.

²³ Data collected by UNICEF reported in 'Horn of Africa: A Call for Action, February 2017' <<https://reliefweb.int/node/1906393>>.

Further to this, in Kenya, most of the pastoral areas were experiencing atypical pasture and water stress, adversely affecting livestock productivity and household incomes. An intensification of coping strategies was seen, such as reducing food intake, skipping meals, and livestock destocking, are currently supporting household food access and consumption. This was expected to continue as prevailing hotter-than-normal land surface temperatures accelerated forage and water depletion, with the forecast for below-average March to May long rains in both bimodal and unimodal areas.

The March–May 2017 long rains were also below average and it was expected that the July 2017 food harvests would also be below average, leading to a corresponding decline in access to and consumption of food. In addition, the African Armyworm infestation had already affected around 69,000 hectares of farming land by this time, with prices of basic food commodities (such as maize) in Kenya having soared, as well as livestock prices in pastoralist areas decreasing due to the poor condition of animals. As a result people reduced what they were eating, with many families eating one meal a day. Food shortages in 2017 were further compounded a lack of access to water due to non-operational water points, anxiety about upcoming elections and high levels of severe acute malnutrition among children below the age of five ²⁴. It was recommended that blanket supplementary feeding for young children and pregnant and lactating women would avert a catastrophic spike in mortality in the months ahead ²⁵.

In addition, periods of drought in rural areas raises protection concerns as the distances people needed to travel to collect water increases. As it is often women and girls collecting water, this increases their vulnerability and is a key factor in girls' absence from school. This was seen increasingly in early 2017, as well as increasing conflicts related to land, due to the pressure for individuals (mainly men) to migrate with livestock to find water and pasture – also leaving women alone to cope in the household. There was a surge of people becoming displaced into the bush or camps ²⁶.

The government of Kenya declared a national emergency in response to drought conditions in February 2017 amid reports from various actors, including the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) ²⁷, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) ²⁸, the Kenyan Red Cross, World Food Programme (WFP) and various technical coordination groups relating to health & nutrition, livestock and agriculture, of which ActionAid is a member ²⁹.

²⁴ Oxfam (2017) Kenya Drought Crisis: A Call for Action (July) <<https://reliefweb.int/report/kenya/kenya-drought-crisis-call-action>>.

²⁵ Chatterjee S, United Nations Resident Coordinator and the UNDP Resident Representative in Kenya 'Kenya's Drought: Response Must be Sustainable, Not Piecemeal.

²⁶ Key informant interview with Tangulbei Women Network, Baringo county, Kenya.

²⁷ National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) <www.ndma.go.ke/>.

²⁸ Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) <www.fews.net/>.

²⁹ Key informant interview with National Drought Management Authority, Baringo County, Kenya.

Context analysis

Somaliland

Somaliland, which lies in an arid and semi-arid environment, frequently experiences recurrent episodes of drought, which has become a serious natural hazard. Drought affects large proportion of the population in a number of ways such as causing loss of life, crop failures, food shortages which might lead to malnutrition, health problems and mass migration³⁰.

In Somaliland there are two main rainy seasons; the Gu rains normally expected April, May and June and the Deyr rains expected October, November and December – very similar to Kenya.

One of the main challenges faced in Somaliland is severe water shortages and lack of pasture in all affected areas affected by drought. Several regions of Somaliland had experienced below average rainfall and extensive drought since 2015 increasing the number of food insecure, which had spilt over into 2016. In late 2016 the Deyr rains were again largely below average. Following severe water shortages and lack of pasture in the affected areas, unusually high levels of migration were observed from Sanaag region to coastal areas, indicating that populations were moving with their livestock to search for pasture and water. In early 2016, with the availability of water reportedly classified to be almost zero in many villages, the Somaliland government issued an appeal to agencies and donors stating that there is a need to act immediately and mobilize swiftly to support these vulnerable people who have been suffering for months.

The appeal was revised and relaunched several times throughout 2016. In December 2016, the average annual goat prices were observed to decrease by 20% partly because of poor body conditions reducing their value³¹. In January 2017, although prices of imported staple food were stable with normal access to humanitarian interventions, Togdeer region of Somaliland was classified as IPC phase 2, which is borderline adequate to meet consumption requirement. Sanaag region was considered to be IPC phase 3, indicating a food consumption gap and a critical nutrition situation. In both regions very poor water and pasture conditions were observed, as well as high levels of livestock deaths due to drought and disease – the main asset amongst a predominantly pastoralist population. The projected IPC for the following months of 2017 was phase 4, which indicates inadequate food access to meet food consumption requirements³².

In February 2017, a further revision of the emergency appeal was made to support 78,990 beneficiaries (13,165 households), following the worsening situation reflected in the FEWSNET and IPC reports regarding the drought, food security and nutrition situation³³. Although prices of imported staple food were stable with normal access to humanitarian interventions, the Togdeer region of Somaliland (an ActionAid programme area) was classified as IPC phase 2 (stressed), which translates as 'borderline adequate to meet consumption requirement'. Sanaag region (also ActionAid programme area) was largely considered to be in IPC phase 3, indicating a crisis mode or 'poor food consumption gap and a critical nutrition situation'³⁴. In both regions very poor water and pasture conditions were observed, as well as high levels of livestock deaths due to drought and disease – the

³⁰ Abdulkadir G, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2017) Assessment of Drought Recurrence in Somaliland: Causes, Impacts and Mitigations. April.

³¹ Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit – Somalia (FSNAU) 'Food Security Analysis Post Deyr Rains 2016/17, Northwest Regions' <<http://www.fsnau.org/publications?page=3>>.

Ibid

³³ IFRC 'Emergency Plan of Action operation update. Drought, 13 February 2017. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/MDRSO00505ou_0.pdf>.

main asset amongst a predominantly pastoralist population. The projected IPC for the following months of 2017 was phase 4, which indicates 'inadequate food access to meet food consumption requirements'³⁵ with 16% having a borderline acceptable score³⁶. 69% of the 295 respondents also said that they were borrowing food from neighbours and relatives in order to cope³⁷.

In terms of the 2017 Gu rains expected in the months of April, May and June, the rainfall forecast from Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum (GHACOF 45) released in February 2017 indicated a high likelihood of below normal to near normal rains across most locations³⁸. Reports from that period show that the Gu rains were indeed poor, sporadic and scattered. The rains were more than 30% below average across large areas and more than 50% below average in the worst-affected areas, according to the Global Food Security alert issued by FEWSNET in June 2017³⁹. In March 2017, there were a few pockets in Somaliland that recorded good rains that led to recharge of some of the water points, as well as regeneration of pasture and improvement of livestock body conditions in some areas. However, there was still an elevated risk of famine in Somaliland due to severe food consumption gaps, high acute malnutrition and high disease burden, exacerbated by a long dry period until end of April. It was noted that only 20% to 40% of the ground water sources were sufficiently re-charged – the rest remain water stressed⁴⁰. The most seriously affected areas were the eastern regions of Sanaag, Sool and Togdheer⁴¹ (with Sanaag and Togdheer being two of the ActionAid DEC response regions).



Meeting with members of the community in FGDs in Somaliland

In several ways the situation was worse than the 2010-11 drought in the Horn of Africa. This was because it was the third consecutive year of drought in the region and multiple years of diminished food production has exhausted people's capacity to cope with another shock. In addition, the wider region suffers from chronic and intensifying conflicts, continued access constraints in some areas, rising refugee numbers and communicable disease outbreak. In early 2017, the drought was expected to worsen in the coming months, with low rainfall forecast for March to May 2017, which is the main rainy season for pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities in the drought belt⁴².

During this critical period, appropriate livelihood support to people in the stressed food security phase was prioritised to prevent adoption of irreversible coping strategies and maintain survival in the face of growing acute food insecurity. For example, livestock support and vaccination was underway in 2017 to keep animals alive and productive.

Such interventions also aim to reduce the risk of increased displacement out of rural areas and potentially act as a trigger for the early return of those already displaced. There were reported to be 124,000 IDPs in Somaliland in June 2017. Cases of Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD/cholera) were also key issues in Somaliland⁴³ in 2017.

³⁴ Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) 'Food security expected to deteriorate following forecast below-average Deyr rains, Feb – May 2017' <www.fews.net/east-africa/somalia/food-security-outlook/october-2016>.

³⁵ Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) 'Food security expected to deteriorate following forecast below-average Deyr rains, Feb – May 2017' <www.fews.net/east-africa/somalia/food-security-outlook/october-2016>.

³⁶ Food Consumption Score looks at the adequacy of household current food consumption.

³⁷ Muse A N (2017) Needs Assessment-Food Security. November.

³⁸ Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit 'Climate Update January 2017' <<https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-climate-update-january-2017-monthly-rainfall-and-ndvi-issued-february-21-2017>>.

³⁹ Famine Early Warning System Network 'Global Food Security Alert: June 21, 2017' <<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/global-food-security-alert-june-21-2017>> consulted January 2018.

⁴⁰ Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations 'Gu 2017 Rainfall Performance: June 2017' <<https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/gu-2017-rainfall-performance-march-june-2017-issued-28-june-2017>>.

⁴¹ Abdulkadir G, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2017) Assessment of Drought Recurrence in Somaliland: Causes, Impacts and Mitigations. April.

⁴² UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2017) Horn of Africa: A Call for Action, February 2017 <<https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/horn-africa-call-action-february-2017-enar>>.

⁴³ OCHA 'Drought response in the Horn of Africa; situation report no. 13, June 2017' <<https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-drought-response-situation-report-no-13-20-june-2017>>.

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Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of the independent evaluation is to provide accountability to the DEC, its stakeholders and donors as to the effectiveness or otherwise of the funds spent and also to provide ActionAid and partners with recommendations and learning for future responses.

Normally DEC evaluations are scheduled for the end of phase 2, but as ActionAid allocated the large majority of DEC funding to phase 1 response given the scale of need, an exception was made and an evaluation was planned to assess the extent to which ActionAid's DEC phase 1 response has

achieved its planned outcomes and been implemented in line with ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature and commitments to the Core Humanitarian Standards. Further to this, this evaluation has itself been an exercise in accountability to affected populations, as well as an opportunity to gather evidence about the impact of the response.



Meeting with members of the community in FGDs in Kenya

Evaluation goal and questions

The ultimate goal of this evaluation was to assess the extent to which ActionAid's response has achieved its planned outcomes⁴⁴ and been implemented in line with ActionAid's humanitarian signature and commitments to the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS)⁴⁵, as well as evaluating based on the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria⁴⁶.

Core evaluation questions⁴⁷

1. Assess the response in terms of the Core Humanitarian Standard, complemented by the OECD/DAC criteria of: effectiveness, impact, relevance, efficiency and sustainability⁴⁸.
2. Assess the extent to which ActionAid's response has achieved its intended outcomes as given in DEC plans for Phase 1.
3. Capture lessons learnt from implementation and specific modalities of the response in each of the outcome areas, this will include contextual research and evidence from this evaluation and external sources.
4. Assess the extent to which the response was conducted in line with, and helped further, ActionAid's humanitarian signature⁴⁹.

⁴⁴ This evaluation has defined drought as a permanent (from the beginning times of droughts until the end of the duration) and unusual deficit of moisture, including rainfall and natural water reserves/sources. Abdulkadir G, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2017) Assessment of Drought Recurrence in Somaliland: Causes, Impacts and Mitigations. April.

⁴⁵ Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) 'The Standard' <<https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/the-standard>> consulted December 2017.

⁴⁶ The OECD/DAC evaluation standards that have been utilised are: impact, effectiveness (incl. timeliness), efficiency, relevance and accountability.

⁴⁷ ActionAid terms of reference of ActionAid's DEC East Africa response.

⁴⁸ As defined by DAC & ALNAP i.e. <<http://www.alnap.org/resource/5253.aspx>>.

⁴⁹ Action Aid's Humanitarian Signature can be found in our Emergency Preparedness and Response Handbook <<http://eprhandbook.actionaid.org/>>.

In summary, ActionAid aims for humanitarian responses to: actively promote women's leadership and the role of women in the response; shift power to communities, partners and local intuitions; and to promote accountability to affected communities.

The evaluation has also aimed to answer the following additional questions:

1. Has the response contributed to enabling national organisations to take lead in the humanitarian response (thereby contributing to the aims of the 'Shifting the Power' project⁵⁰ and ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature)?
2. In terms of gender equality humanitarian programming, to what extent did the response promote women's leadership and were women and girls in communities regarding women and girls equipped to be agents of change and focus on reinforcing their own ability to address their own needs (ActionAid strategy 2028)?
3. Did the response seek to enable and equip affected communities to hold local authorities to account, to communicate their priorities to authorities and to challenge injustices such as access to land?
4. What was the role of partner organisations and the effectiveness of these partnerships in relation of delivering the main response outcomes?
5. The utilisation of evidence and scientific information to inform strategy – including combining with community experience and traditional knowledge.
6. The evaluation team proposes to utilise any theory of change model (or to develop this with ActionAid as part of the overall evaluation process) to assess linkages between the emergency response to resilience and the longer-term change process – or the potential for this.



Meeting with members of the community in FGDs in Somaliland

Overall approach of the evaluation methodology

Following a review of the main objectives of the response in both contexts, being mainly an emergency humanitarian response combined with activities to enhance resilience and sustainability, the evaluation consultants and ActionAid considered that a qualitative methodology would be the main focus, meaning that comprehensive and in-depth findings could be collected from ActionAid, partner organisations and the communities affected by the drought who had been engaged in the response. The design of the focus group discussions also included quantitative elements such as impact indicator⁵¹

⁵⁰The 'Shifting the Power' project is a three-year project (2015-2018) that is supported by the Start Network, a consortium of six organisations;

ActionAid, Oxfam, CAFOD, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide and Tear Fund. The project was formed after the realisation that humanitarian response is not well balanced, such that national non-governmental organisations who are the first and main responders to disasters are not enabled to take a lead in humanitarian response. In Kenya from 2016, the project aimed to develop capacity strengthening initiatives at the community, institutional (NGO) and national level to guarantee accountability of the whole humanitarian system to affected communities. <www.actionaid.org/kenya/shifting-power-project> consulted February 2018.

⁵¹US Office of Data, Analysis, Research & Evaluation Administration on Children, Youth & Families (2016)

<www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/acyf/qualitative_research_methods_in_program_evaluation.pdf> May.

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ranking and participatory tools such as seasonal timelines. This was to enable the identification of trends and more accurate conclusions.

Teams of enumerators were recruited in each context with assistance from ActionAid in Kenya and Somaliland. The teams participated in two-day trainings in Nairobi and Hargeisa respectively, who then facilitated focus group discussions with communities, according to the data collection plan. The independent evaluation consultants conducted key informant interviews with the partner organisations and ActionAid team members (eg. programme managers and Capacity Building Coordinators) ⁵².

The evaluation was framed around the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria and the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS). This provided the framework for the evaluation questions posed in the focus group discussions and key informant interviews, which flowed from the standards. Questions were divided into several key areas that are reflected in the results section of this report;

This evaluation team applied a holistic approach to the methodology, to ensure reliable of findings and inclusivity, as well as representation of the groups involved in ActionAid's response. The different and interlinked approaches included are described in Box 2 below.

Box 2: Main approaches of the evaluation

- Utilisation of primary and secondary data; in addition to the collection of a range of primary data from communities engaged in the response and other key stakeholders, the evaluation team has conducted an in-depth desk review to further contextual analysis and the rationale for any changes and impacts identified by the evaluation. The desk review has included the following sources; Desk review methods were employed to analyse both internal and external documents related to ActionAid's response and each country context ⁵³.
- Qualitative data collection and analysis: in order to gain a more in-depth understanding of the reasons for impacts and changes found, the evaluation team included various qualitative approaches, as appropriate to the context. These included focus group discussion and key informant interviews.
- Impact evaluation: regarding women, girls, men and boys, as well as other relevant groups. Inclusion of retrospective and quantitative techniques during focus group discussion, such as timelines, seasonal calendars and impact indicator ranking. In addition to being to compare the situation of the communities before and after the response began, these methods enabled more reliable findings, identification of trends and comparisons across different groups and locations.
- Quality evaluation: considering each of the OECD's Development Assistance Criteria (DAC), as well as integrating the Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS).
- Gender dimensions: integration of gender equality and women's empowerment is essential to effective, participatory and equitable humanitarian protection and assistance. To support this, this evaluation has explored how women have been affected by the intervention and the effect on gender relations. Women's voices have been clearly heard in the evaluation and the timing and location of evaluation activities were designed to maximize women's ability to participate in the evaluation. The evaluation has focused on any changes in gender relations as a consequence of the disaster and the intervention. It has not focused on sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) through quantitative surveys, although the data collection has ensured a balance of men and women in the focus group discussions.

⁵²ActionAid Kenya, December 2017.

⁵³Documents included in the desk review were project output reports, organisational strategy, ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature, budgets, reports to the DEC, Real Time Evaluations and Post Distribution Monitoring of the response, as well as external assessments and reports from the government, UN and NGOs that related to the context.

- Utilisation focused evaluation: the evaluation team have worked with ActionAid to inform and consult at each stage of the evaluation process, to ensure that the evaluation produces findings and recommendations that are useful and applicable to future emergency responses.
- Participatory approaches to data collection: which was ensured by the framework of the sample and the techniques for conducting interviews and focus group discussions.
- Elements of contributing tracing methods: this was included to further assist the identification of causality and assessing the degree to which the response has contributed to any changes seen in the outcome areas.
- Transparency about the methodology: this report aims to clarify each step of the evaluation methodology through detailing the aims of the evaluation and how each aim will be informed.
- Transparency and ethical standards: the evaluation team and the enumerators explained to the affected communities engaged in the evaluation the purpose of the exercise, how the information will be used and that their personal details will remain confidential. The evaluation team have followed ActionAid's ethical standards for research and data collection, this was also included in the training with data collection teams in Kenya and Somaliland.
- Responding to urgent issues: it was highlighted in the training with the enumerators that if any information were to be identified by the evaluation that requires urgent action, such as reported violations, reports of misconduct, allegations of exploitation or allegations of corruption, this will be immediately reported to the evaluation consultant and to ActionAid.

Focus group discussions

A total of 52 focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with communities affected by drought who had been engaged in the phase 1 response in Kenya and Somaliland, as well as six with women trained in GBV prevention awareness and protection services in both contexts. There were also 5 discussions with head teachers and teachers in Kenya regarding the distribution of food to schools. The FGDs had an average number of 10 participants per group. Apart from the FGDs with teachers, they were conducted separately with men and women. The FGDs were designed to obtain the views of specific groups within the sample of communities included. Participants were invited to attend a focus group discussion with a maximum of ten participants in each group. There were two enumerators facilitating each group with one enumerator facilitating and the other taking notes. An equal gender balance of enumerators was also ensured, with male enumerators with the male groups and female enumerators with the female groups. All enumerators had undertaken a two-day training course with the evaluation team in Hargeisa and Nairobi before the data collection commenced.

Seasonal timelines

The FGDs with the communities affected by the emergency also included a seasonal timeline. This was a participatory data collection tool designed to capture the situation of the communities over a 13-month period; from around six months before the response began (September 2016 – mid-March 2017) and also for the duration of the six-month phase 1 response (mid-March 2017 – September 2017). One purpose of seasonal timelines is to identify seasonal variations in areas such as timing of crop harvesting seasons, dry and rainy season, as well as variations in other rural livelihood activities such as migration with livestock at certain times of year. This evaluation has utilised seasonal timelines in this way, further enhanced by mapping of the challenges faced by communities according to such seasonal factors. The challenges identified included below average rains, crop failures, atypical livestock migration patterns due to water shortages and conflict over pasture. In addition, any trends in positive and negative coping strategies used by the communities at different points in time were recorded, also according to the seasons and the calendar year.

A further key aim of seasonal timelines in this evaluation was to enable data collection before and after the response began. This meant that it was possible to analysis trends of how the assistance contributed to any changes in the situation of the affected communities, if there were any confounding factors present and to develop any recommendations specific to certain times of year. The applicability of the seasonal timelines was further enhanced by a relatively high number of focus group discussions with communities (44) enabling the development of trends across communities – producing more reliable findings. This was triangulated by FGDs and KIs with other stakeholders, as well as desk research.

Table 1 below illustrates the seasonable timeline (which was followed up with more in-depth focus group discussion questions).

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Table 1: Structure of the seasonal timelines, utilised in the FGDs with communities engaged in the response

	2016				2017								
Timeline questions	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
1. Which were the dry and rainy months?													
2. What were the main challenges you faced during the period Sept 16-Sept 17, by month?													
3. What did you do to cope with the main challenges you faced?													

Key informant interviews

A total of 13 key informant interviews (KII) were conducted with key stakeholders in the programme. These included staff from ActionAid International, ActionAid Kenya and ActionAid Somaliland, as well as the main partner organisations of ActionAid based in each county or region where the evaluation took place. A KII was also conducted with an office of the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) in Kenya.

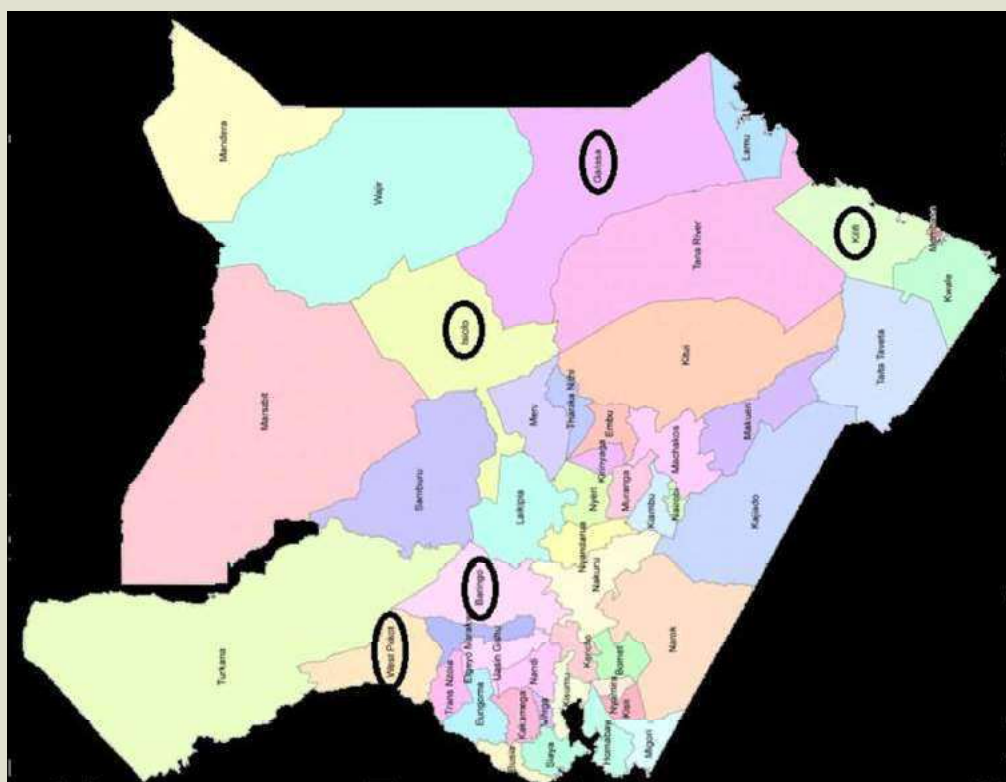
The KIIs were designed to be a purposeful conversation between the participants, enabling the collection of detailed information from the key informants. They were designed to work in conjunction with the focus group discussions, with the KII interview questions adapted for each individual and the nature of their engagement in the response.

The full list of focus group discussions and key informant interviews for Kenya and Somaliland can be seen in Annex A.

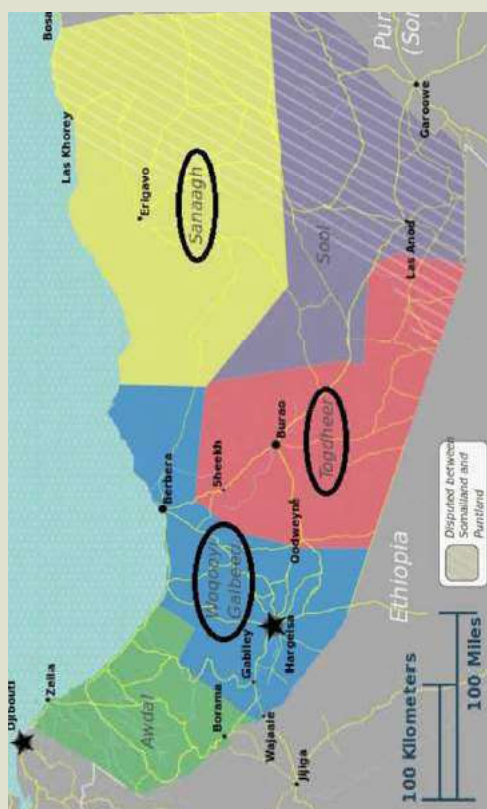
⁵⁴Terms of Reference for the external evaluation of 'ActionAid's phase 1 DEC East Africa Response'.

⁵⁵ActionAid DEC phase 1 final output reports. Figures confirmed by Programme Managers in Kenya and Somaliland.

Maps 1 and 2 below highlight the locations of the counties and regions in Kenya and Somaliland that were included in the phase 1 response.



Source: Wikipedia commons



Source: Wikipedia commons

Methodology

Overall geographical scope

The overall geographical scope of the phase 1 response and the number of beneficiaries is summarised in Table 2 below, as well as a summary of the scope of the evaluation.

Table 2: Geographic scope of the phase 1 response and the evaluation

Country	No. of counties/ regions in the response	No. of direct beneficiaries in the response ⁵⁵	Counties/ regions in the response	Direct beneficiaries per county/ region	Included in the evaluation sample
Kenya	5 counties		Baringo	23,000	X
			West Pokot	25,550	X
			Garissa		X
			Isiolo	11,714	
			Kilifi	12,557	
Somaliland	3 regions	22,335	Sanaag	7624	X
			Togdheer	6151	X
			Waqooyi Galbeed	8580	

Table 3: Main groups included in the focus group discussions

Kenya	Number of FGDs	Somaliland	Number of FGDs
Communities affected by drought included in the phase 1 response	24	Communities affected by drought included in the phase 1 response	20
Women (including members of women's networks) trained in protection services	4	Women (including members of women's networks) trained in protection services	2
Head teachers and teachers from schools included in the food distributions to schools	2		
Total number of FGDs	30		22
Approximate number of participants (based on an average of 10 people per FGD)	300		220

Sampling

SEASONAL TIMELINE	APRIL, 2016	MAY, 2016	JUNE, 2016	JULY, 2016	AUG, 2016	SEPT, 2016	OCT, 2016	NOV, 2016	DEC, 2016	JAN, 2017	FEB, 2017
Q.1	D										
Q.2	They were farming and used to fish due to lack of rain		People migrated in search of pasture and water					They had a great change women were left to take care of the family while men were out to find the livestock	People experienced the death of their animals due to persistent drought.	The community lost several livestock due to persistent famine.	The prolonged drought led loss of life especially children and old people
Q.3	The women that they had their livestock were not able to feed them due to lack of pasture and water for their sustainability		They were able to buy to their families the meat from the dead animals								feeding on the dead animals
Q.4	Some households had to take a meal once a day is not to eat the little food they had to last for some time.							They survived with wild fruits	The community in this month relied on the wild fruits and other food for survival	There was no food for children due to the drought they were not able to go to school	
Q.5			Since the food was little their health deteriorated and could not manage to last sustained by one meal a day.						Some households children were unable to come up to school because of lack of money	Children did not go to school because they were not able to pay the school fees	
Q.6											

One of the seasonal timelines created during a FGD in Kenya

The phase 1 response included five counties in Kenya and 3 regions in Somaliland. The evaluation sampled three of these counties in Kenya and two of the regions in Somaliland.

These locations were selected as they provided a broad geographic scope, with the potential to enable a good range of findings in each response context. Further to this, during 2017 ActionAid conducted internal evaluations in some of the other counties and regions in Kenya and Somaliland and the evaluation sought to exclude these areas from the sample as learning had already been undertaken in these areas⁵⁶.

The evaluation focused qualitative methods, focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs), as the main mode of data collection and did not utilise a statistically significant sample or household survey. This is because following a review of the project documents and initial discussions with the ActionAid programme managers, it was jointly concluded that a more in-depth qualitative approach would be more appropriate to understand the experiences of the communities and to identify the factors that contributed to success, lessons learnt and building on strategies for sustainability and resilience. In addition, the consultants have reviewed evaluations of other, similar responses in the region that successfully took this approach and have drawn learning and experiences from these methodologies. However, some quantitative approaches were integrated into the FGDs, such as seasonal timelines and ranking of impact, to enable to assessment of trends and the contribution of the assistance to the impacts or changes seen.

The main groups included in the focus group discussions and key informant interviews are summarised in Tables 3 above and 4 below. A more detailed list of the evaluation participants is in Annex A.

⁵⁶ActionAid conducted an internal 'Real Time Evaluation' in Kilifi county, Kenya in July 2017 and a Real Time Evaluation in Somaliland in July 2017.

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Table 4: Main groups included in the key informant interviews

Kenya	Number of KIIs	Somaliland	Number of KIIs
Partner organisation in each county included in the evaluation	3	Partner organisation in each region included in the evaluation	3
ActionAid Programme Manager	1	ActionAid Programme and Policy Manager	1
Capacity Building Coordinators based in counties	2	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	1
Representative from the National Drought Management Authority	1		
East Africa response			Number of KIIs
ActionAid Executive Director			1
ActionAid International Humanitarian Director			1
ActionAid UK Senior Monitoring & Evaluation Advisor			1
Total number of KIIs			15

Language and translations

The primary data collection with affected populations was mainly conducted in local language (eg. Swahili or Somali), with it being conducted in English in some cases where the groups preferred this. The enumerators recorded the discussions taking detailed notes on seasonal timelines and on the focus group discussion tools. Translations of the notes were conducted by the enumerators into English, with the original notes handed over to the ActionAid offices in Kenya and Somaliland at the end of the evaluation. ActionAid staff support this process, for example, the Capacity Building Coordinators in Kenya and programme staff in Somaliland.

Timeline to be evaluated and measurement of impact

The timeline for the phase 1 response was mid-March to September 2016. This evaluation utilised a longer timeline for some of the focus group discussion and key informant interview questions (in the time frame September 2016 until September 2017), adding around six months before the response began.

This extended timeline aimed to provide data from the communities and other stakeholders from several months before the phase 1 response began in order to find out how communities coped with the challenges they faced before mid-March 2017 – and to see if anything changed after it began. This means that it is possible to determine some level of contribution of the effect of the humanitarian assistance on any changes to the lives of the communities engaged in the response ⁵⁷.

Standards to be evaluated

Through qualitative methods this evaluation has accounted for international recognised quality standards and criteria, with a focus on the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) ⁵⁸ and the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria for evaluating development assistance as highlighted in Table 5 below. In addition to the terms of reference for this evaluation (Annex X), these standards have also provided a framework for synthesis, analysis and reporting that could be utilised in future evaluations, enabling qualitative and in-depth evaluation of ActionAid's programme over time, as well as continually building on the contextual analysis.

Lastly, in addition to evaluating the response outcomes in terms of the DAC and CHS standards, as mentioned above, there is an additional focus on ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature, which is described in the next section.

⁵⁷Few R, McAvoy D, Tarazona M, Walden VM (2014) Contribution to Change: An approach to evaluating the role of intervention in disaster recovery. Practical Action Publishing and Oxford: Oxfam GB.

⁵⁸Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) <<https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/>> consulted December 2017.

⁵⁹OECD 'DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance' <<http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>> consulted December 2017.

Methodology

Table 5: Quality standards and criteria included in the evaluation of the phase 1 response

	Source	
Quality standard	Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS)	OECD/Development Assistance Committee criteria (OECD/DAC)
Relevance and timeliness		
Communities and people affected by crisis receive assistance appropriate and relevant to their needs.	CHS 1	DAC/OECD
Communities and people affected by crisis have access to the humanitarian assistance they need at the right time.	CHS 2	
Effectiveness and impact		
Effectiveness; to what extent were the objectives achieved? What were the main factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of objectives?		DAC/OECD
Impact; What has happened as a result of the programme or project? What real difference has the activity made to the beneficiaries? How many people have been affected?	CHS 1	DAC/OECD
Accountability		
Communities and people affected by crisis know their rights and entitlements, have access to information and participate in decisions that affect them.	CHS 4	DAC/OECD
Communities and people affected by crisis have access to safe and responsive mechanisms to handle complaints.	CHS 5	DAC/OECD
Coordinated assistance and organisational learning		
Communities and people affected by crisis receive coordinated, complementary assistance.	CHS 6	
Communities and people affected by crisis can expect delivery of improved assistance as organisations learn from experience and reflection.	CHS 7	
Organisation learning and resource management		
Communities and people affected by crisis receive the assistance they require from competent and well-managed staff and volunteers.	CHS 8	
Communities and people affected by crisis can expect that the organisations assisting them are managing resources effectively, efficiently and ethically	CHS 9	
Resilience		
Communities and people affected by crisis are not negatively affected and are more prepared, resilient and less at-risk as a result of humanitarian action (sustainability)	CHS 3	DAC/OECD

ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature

In addition to the evaluation of the quality standards above, ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature has been integrated in the framework of the evaluation. Box 3 summarises the main aspects of the signature.

Box 3: ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature

ActionAid's humanitarian signature is grounded in the in human rights, focusing on promoting women-led preparedness and response in humanitarian emergencies, occupation and conflicts to strengthen their power and agency to transform the humanitarian system to be more locally led and accountable to affected communities.

The rights of women and other groups made vulnerable by disasters, and protection from violence, exploitation and abuse in times of crises will also be strengthened through community-based protection mechanisms and improved accountability of humanitarian actors. We will build the resilience of rural and urban communities to climate change, disasters and conflicts through transformative actions from the local to the global level, led by women living in poverty and exclusion.

The active engagement of young people will be a priority to prevent the worst effects of emergencies. ActionAid will continue to drive accountability to disaster and conflict affected communities, as well as the shifting of power to local organisations and movements at all levels.

Methodology

The table below explains how ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature has been incorporated into the evaluation.

Table 6: Integration of ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature into the evaluation

Pillar	Details	How it will be integrated
Accountability to affected communities (HS 1)	Effective humanitarian response means that all stakeholders and actors are accountable to affected communities.	The extent to which affected communities were engaged in planning and decision making, including the existence, maintenance and management ongoing feedback mechanisms will be evaluated (also part of the CHS).
	ActionAid works with communities and local organisations to support them to hold powerful actors (including national government, donors and INGOs) to account and to ensure that they are responding appropriately to the needs expressed by the communities themselves.	The extent to which affected communities have been supported, as part of the response, with tools and processes to hold powerful actors (including national government, donors and INGOs) to account and communicate their needs to such actors (also part of the CHS).
Shifting the power (HS 2)	ActionAid's presence and relation with local organisations in communities are enhanced through our responses and we build local capacity.	The extent to which the response was implemented in partnership with local organisations in communities, included the level of tailored capacity building for a quality and impactful response.
	We enable local leadership in programme design and response.	The extent to which local organisations were engaged in response design and implementation.
	Support access of local leaders to national funding and advocacy opportunities.	Review of if and how local leaders have access to national funding and advocacy (or at the county /regional level) and how sustainable this access is.
Women's leadership (HS 3)	Women are often the worst affected in emergencies, as well as the first responders. We ensure power is shifted to women leaders in order to address existing power imbalances at all levels by promoting the leadership of women who are affected by crisis.	Evaluation of the effectiveness of response activities to promote the leadership of women affected by the crisis - and shift the balance of decision making to women.
	This will also help mean that we will focus on women's rights programming, including protection programming, so that women have the space and agency to lead change programmes.	Evaluate the quality and impact of protection programming - and how this links to women's leadership.
Sustainability and resilience (HS 4)	Underlying the Humanitarian Signature, it is crucial to link emergency response to resilience building and longer-term, sustainable change. Including empowering individuals and addressing inequalities through all of our development programming.	As Phase 1 of the response has been mainly focused on emergency relief, this pillar may not be fully relevant until Phase 2. However, it is anticipated that through building the capacity of local partner organisations and of the communities to hold key stakeholders to account, that this pillar will be reflected in the evaluation findings.

Limitations

Research methodologies often contain certain limitations that are important to acknowledge so there is transparency about the reliability of results. Two key potential limitations have been identified below, with the approaches that were taken to mitigate these limitations.

Limitation: the evaluation methodology included seasonal timelines that were integrated in to the 44 focus group discussions (FGDs) with the communities engaged in the response in Kenya and Somaliland. These asked for recall of events from six months before the phase 1 response began. Such research methods such as surveys, interviews and FGDs usually rely on the assumption that an individual's memory of events or circumstances is generally accurate, consistent, and reliable. However, psychological research into memory processes indicates that this may not always be the case. Memory is a reconstruction of events based on several elements and subject to distortion as well as failure (i.e. forgetting). Research also suggests that recollections tend to be 'broadly true' rather than strictly accurate and that errors in remembering (such as errors in dates, specific details, and estimations of the duration of events) tend to increase as the time since the event lengthens ⁶⁰. It has been shown that stress, trauma, and depression – all frequently occurring in post-disaster contexts – can influence memory and recall ⁶¹.

Mitigating factors/solutions: as it is important to acknowledge that an individual's memory of their situation may not be 100% accurate, specific details such as the name of an NGO that provided assistance or the dates on which that assistance was provided need to be verified from more than one source (triangulation). Furthermore, an expectation of 'broadly true' and inconsistencies in individual accounts may be more appropriate than expecting memories to be completely accurate ⁶².

Limitation: the participants for the focus group discussions (FGDs) with the communities were invited in advance by the implementing partner organisations, facilitated by ActionAid programme staff in each county/region. To a degree, attendance was also dictated by who was available. Although the selection of individuals was intended to be as random as possible the evaluation team did not have complete control over the sampling.

Mitigating factors/solutions: this limitation was mitigated in two ways. Firstly, in terms of the more purposive nature of selecting participants for the FGDs, 44 FGDs were carried out with the communities engaged in the response across Kenya and Somaliland (as well as six FGDs with women training in protection services and two FGDs with teachers/head teachers), with an average of 10 participants per group. This relatively high number of FGDs with affected communities (including approximately 520 members of communities in both contexts), complemented by key informant interviews and desk research, meant that trends could be identified across the FGDs especially in terms of the main challenges faced by the communities according to different seasons, as well as the ranked impacts of the response and recommendations for building resilience in the future.

⁶⁰Herlihy J, Turner S (2015) Untested assumptions: psychological research and credibility assessment in legal decision-making. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*. May.

⁶¹Few R, McAvoy D, Tarazona M, Walden VM (2014) Contribution to Change. An approach to evaluating the role of intervention in disaster recovery. Oxfam publications.

⁶²Ibid

Results

As a result of the severe drought in East Africa in 2016 and 2017, ActionAid launched a humanitarian response in Kenya and Somaliland (and Ethiopia) in late 2016/early 2017. The response initially utilised relatively small-scale funds from DPRF (Disaster Preparedness Response Funds), as well as country level unrestricted funds. However, the response was significantly scaled up from mid-March 2017 in Kenya and Somaliland with an appeals budget of £657,874 from the DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee)⁶³. The DEC initial 6-month phase 1 response ran from mid-March to the end of September 2017. This section presents the findings of the evaluation of ActionAid's DEC phase 1 emergency response, in the framework of the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), complemented by the OECD's Development Assistance Criteria (OECD/DAC). The findings are based on the evidence gathered in focus group discussions (FGD) with affected communities in numerous locations, FGDs with women trained in providing protection services, FGDs with teachers and head teachers (in Kenya only), key informant interviews (KII) with a range of other stakeholders and a desk review of relevant documents. The results of the desk review are integrated throughout the report to support the evaluation findings and conclusions.

The evaluation results are structured by the following sections:

- Relevance and timeliness
- Effectiveness and impact
- Accountability to affected populations
- Resilience and sustainability
- Gender analysis
- Resource management

The findings of a further core humanitarian standard, 'coordinated and complementary response' are also integrated throughout these sections. This results also considers the extent to which the response was conducted in line with, and helped further, by ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature⁶⁴.

Relevance and timeliness

ActionAid has demonstrated that the design of the response in Kenya and Somaliland was based on careful analysis of evidence from a range of sources, especially the affected communities, in order to ensure that assistance was appropriate and relevant to the needs of populations affected by the drought.

In terms of how decisions were reached about what response activities to prioritise, ActionAid Kenya and ActionAid Somaliland were monitoring the impact of the drought within communities that they were already supporting before the phase 1 emergency response. This was being done through continuous assessments with the communities and county/local government. Rapid needs assessments were then carried out with communities between January and February 2017, which also included key information from key external stakeholders. For example, in Kenya stakeholders included the ASAL Stakeholders Forum⁶⁵ and UN led cluster assessments. Other sources of information that informed the initial assessments were UNICEF situation reports and the Kenya Food Security Steering Group Monthly situation reports, which are coordinated by the National Drought Management Authority.

⁶³ DEC – Disasters Emergency Committee <www.dec.org.uk>.

⁶⁴ Action Aid's Humanitarian Signature can be found in our Emergency Preparedness and Response Handbook <<http://eprhandbook.actionaid.org/>>. In summary, this aims for humanitarian responses to: actively promote women's

leadership and the role of women in the response; shift power to communities, partners and local intuitions; and to promote accountability to affected communities

⁶⁵ The ASAL stakeholders Forum relates to arid and semi-arid lands in Kenya. It was created in 2012 to maximise the collective voice and influence of ASAL communities and stakeholders, as well as promoting dialogue between them and the national and county governments. .



A partner organisation of ActionAid planning a distribution in Somaliland

In Somaliland, ActionAid Somaliland applied a decade of experience in promoting women's rights and facilitating establishment of grassroots women collectives (coalitions). Cases and learning from those engagements, as well as with input from UNFPA sources, were factored in the design and implementation of the response protection activities. In both Kenya and Somaliland, ActionAid's partner organisations, with community leaders and elders, led the selection of the specific individuals and households for the assistance.

Further to this, the section below relating to 'effectiveness and impact' describes how the greatest area of need that was cited by the communities to the evaluation team that they faced before the phase 1 response began (shortage of food and water) directly correlates to the two greatest areas of spending (food and water distributions). A facilitating factor for this was the initial rapid needs assessments, for example, in Somaliland the assessment found that communities considered shortage of food, water, sanitations and lack of cash to pay for education due to loss of livestock to be their greatest needs – these were all focus areas of the response ⁶⁶ .

In addition, there are examples of ActionAid's flexibility and capacity to speak up in technical forums about any spikes in needs, as well as the ability to act where possible with other partners providing additional humanitarian assistance. This has furthered the relevance of the humanitarian assistance. The evaluation found that partner organisations and technical forums kept ActionAid informed of the situation in communities during the phase 1 response. For example, after the inception of the response, a cholera outbreak was reported by the partner organisation in the Togdheer region of Somaliland, as well as smaller cases in other regions. ActionAid rapidly diverted allocation for water trucking to this new emergency to raise the awareness of the people to how to prevent and mitigate the disease and to distribute water purification tablets to at risk communities ⁶⁷ . Also in Somaliland, ActionAid noted that many of the community localities included in the programme did not have a health centre but there was a huge demand for health services, exacerbated increasing malnutrition. ActionAid liaised with Ministry of Health and other humanitarian actors focusing on the health sector such as Save the Children, UNICEF and WHO. The UN coordination cluster then discussed this critical need and a number of actors were involved to fill the health gaps (although the impact of this was beyond the scope of this evaluation). In Kenya, previously unmet nutritional needs were identified in Baringo and Isiolo counties through mass screening of children under five and pregnant and lactating mothers. Most of these needs were addressed through ActionAid's integrated management of acute malnutrition and ongoing community outreach. To reach the most vulnerable, ActionAid worked with partners to distribute UNICEF Ready to use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) and mineral supplements, as well as strengthening referral mechanisms including activation of health centres ⁶⁸ .

⁶⁶Muse A N (2017) Needs assessment - food security. Preliminary findings report for ActionAid Somaliland (November).

⁶⁷ Key informant interview with ActionAid Somaliland.

⁶⁸ActionAid (2017) Disaster Response Phase 1 Final Report to the DEC.

Results

However, although there are many achievements within this quality standard area and the planned outputs were all achieved (as highlighted later in this report), there are still lessons that can be drawn from the programme design phase in terms of its relevance. For example, the evaluation noted that almost all of the 44 FGD groups with affected populations said that they were involved in the broad design of the response, several FGD groups within the communities noted that they would like to give more detailed input about their needs and the most vulnerable households on a more ongoing basis – and directly to ActionAid if possible. The main reason for this is that they felt that some specific needs and vulnerable households could be missed and also because the situation is continuously changing. This is described in more detail in the later section 'Accountability to affected populations'.

Integration of ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature⁶⁹

One aspect of the Humanitarian Signature is related to shifting the power to local leadership in programme design and response. ActionAid has fulfilled this by working with Women's Networks/partners, local leaders and community committees to provide feedback about the most pressing needs resulting from the drought conditions. This approach enabled the relevance of the response. When comparing the initial response design to the results of the evaluation, it can be seen that the greatest needs faced by the communities in the six months before the response began, as documented on the seasonal timelines, corresponded with the needs identified by ActionAid and the main focus areas of the assistance. Working with community groups enabled the relevance of the response to the genuine needs, complemented by close coordination with technical forums with other actors – some of which ActionAid established in different localities.

However, as is described in a later section of the report, several FGDs with affected communities described how they would like to provide more detailed feedback about specific groups and households. In Somaliland, several FGD groups described how they did not have the opportunity to provide information about their needs and prioritise to anyone. Although it is likely that the mechanisms that were used to research the greatest needs and to conduct beneficiary selection did represent the situation in terms of the overall needs, this may have potentially impacted the relevance of the response in terms of the selection of the most vulnerable households, understanding the needs of marginalised groups and more in-depth gender dynamics.

This section also considered if ActionAid demonstrated that they kept informed of any spikes needs as they arose during the phase 1 response period. In Somaliland, many of the community localities included in the programme did not have a health centre. It was noted by ActionAid that there was a huge demand for health services, exacerbated increasing malnutrition. ActionAid liaised with Ministry of Health and other humanitarian actors focusing on the health sector such as Save the Children, UNICEF and WHO. The UN coordination cluster then discussed this critical need and a number of actors were involved to fill the health gaps (although the impact of this was beyond the scope of this evaluation). In Kenya, ActionAid partnered with WFP to support 5000 households affected by malnutrition, especially amongst malnourished mothers and children under 5 years, with highly nutritious food items during each month of the phase 1 response. These are examples of ActionAid's flexibility and capacity to speak up in relevant forums about such spikes in needs, as well as the ability to act where possible with other partners enabling the provision of additional humanitarian assistance.

⁶⁹ ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature has four main components; accountability to affected communities, shifting the power, women's leadership and sustainability and resilience.

Overall, the response demonstrated that it was very relevant to the overall needs, with the needs established with the assistance of Women's Network's/partners, local leaders and committees. Working in coordination with other actors also facilitated this. There was the potential to enable more detailed feedback to enable additional and more in-depth analysis. However, ActionAid was also flexible to respond to spikes of needs during the response (enabled by feedback about the situation by partner organisations and other actors), such as malnutrition outbreaks. ActionAid was able to respond to these in conjunction with other actors, such as WFP.

Communities and people affected by crisis have access to the humanitarian assistance they need at the right time (CHS 2)

ActionAid launched initial emergency assistance to the drought in East Africa towards the end of 2016. This was then scaled up in Kenya and Somaliland from mid-March 2017, following additional funding and support from the DEC.



ActionAid's partner organisation registering people for assistance in Somaliland

Each of the 44 FGDs with the communities affected by the drought in Kenya and Somaliland was asked the question 'did you receive the assistance at the right time?'. Of the 44 groups, 30 said that the assistance did come at the right time. One FGD group said: *"the assistance came at the right time because it saved the lives of people who were almost dying of hunger"* (FGD with women, Serewo, West Pokot county, Kenya).

Also, in Somaliland: *"the drought was severe since December 2016 and continued up during the following year. Therefore, the assistance started at the right time in February (2017) and continued until August, we saw some other actors disappear before August but we needed assistance until then"* (participant from FGD with men, Sanaag region, Somaliland).

However, 14 of the 44 FGD groups with the communities said that they needed the food and water distributions earlier from January 2017, just after the short rains either were largely below average. For example; *"It would have been better if it came earlier as our animals were dying and some of us were starving to death. But when we are speaking together we say; "if ActionAid wasn't here we wouldn't be alive"* (FGD with men, Sanaag region, Somaliland). Also in Kenya, the majority of the groups who said they needed the assistance earlier said that their needs peaked need was January 2017.

When looking at the overall timeline, ActionAid had started to meet some needs in late 2016 following community consultations, although on a smaller scale. Due to pre-existing programmes within the affected areas, ActionAid had an ongoing dialogue with the communities who had alerted ActionAid to indicators of a worsening situation, including shortages of water, protection concerns and increasing numbers of children not attending school largely due to the drought conditions. Following additional rapid needs assessments and updated Integrated Food Classification Phase Reports (ICP) from

Results

FEWSNET⁷⁰, the response was scaled up significantly from mid-March 2017 with appeal funds from the DEC. The table below illustrates a summary of this and how it corresponded to the phase 1 response.

Table 7: Timeline for early warning information and the ActionAid DEC phase 1 response

	June 2016 – January 2017	February 2017 – Sept 2017
Sources of early warning information	<p>Increasing reports about the worsening situation from various actors.</p> <p>In Kenya this included the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA), government of Kenya, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET), the Kenyan Red Cross, World Food Programme (WFP) and various technical coordination groups that ActionAid is a member of.</p> <p>For Somaliland this included the government of Somaliland, FEWSNET, World Food Programme (WFP) and various technical coordination groups that ActionAid is a member of.</p>	<p>10 February 2017 – Government of Kenya declares a drought emergency⁷¹.</p> <p>Government of Somaliland declared a drought emergency in January 2016. Following an emergency appeal with revisions throughout 2016, the appeal was revised again in February 2017 to recognise the critical connections in FEWSNET and IPC reports.</p>
FEWSNET IPC classifications	<p>FEWSNET 'Integrated Food Classification Phase Reports' (IPC) about drought and food security updated the following classifications⁷².</p> <p>Kenya: June 16 – Jan 17: IPC 2 (stressed) for northern half of Baringo, West Pokot and most parts of Garissa counties. IPC 3 (crisis) in central parts of Garissa.</p> <p>Somaliland: Oct 16 – Jan 17: IPC 3 (crisis) for more than half of Sanaag region (IPC 2 for the remainder - stressed). IPC 2 (stressed) for Togheer region.</p>	<p>FEWSNET IPC reports about drought and food security & nutrition updated the following classifications;</p> <p>Kenya: Feb 17 – May 17: IPC 3 (crisis) for northern half of Baringo, West Pokot and most parts of Garissa counties. Remaining areas of counties IPC 2 (stressed)</p> <p>Somaliland: Feb 17 – May 17: IPC 4 (emergency) for most of Sanaag region and IPC 5 (famine) for the remainder. IPC 3 (crisis) for most of Togheer region and IPC 2 for the remainder.</p> <p>According to FEWSNET, the IPC classification would likely have been one phase worse (up to emergency/ famine) without current programmed humanitarian assistance.</p>
ActionAid response	<p>ActionAid launched an initial response in the East Africa region (Kenya, Somaliland and Ethiopia) utilising funds from Disaster Preparedness Response Funds (DPRF).</p>	<p>ActionAid's response was significantly scaled up from mid-March 2017, in five affected counties in Kenya and 3 affected regions in Somaliland. This was enabled by an appeals budget of £657,874 from the DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee)⁷³. The DEC 6-month phase 1 response ran from mid-March to the end of September 2017.</p>

⁷⁰ Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) <www.fews.net>

⁷¹ Kenya: Drought – 2014 – 2018 <<https://reliefweb.int/disaster/dr-2014-000131-ken>>.

⁷² Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) <www.fews.net>

⁷³ DEC – Disasters Emergency Committee <www.dec.org.uk>.

The evaluation team considered how ActionAid's DEC phase 1 response corresponded with information from external early warning systems. In Kenya the formal food insecurity IPC classifications from FEWSNET for June 2016 to January 2017 reported the situation to be mainly 'stressed' in the counties and districts included in this evaluation, also being previous ActionAid programme locations. There were pockets of areas that were classified as 'crisis', combined with other sources of information about the worsening situation this indicated a need to rapidly scale up. Following the failure of the short rains at the end of 2016, the IPC classification moved up a level in most of the programme areas in Kenya from February 2017, reaching 'crisis' levels in some areas. The evaluation found that ActionAid's humanitarian response in Kenya was aligned with this overall timeline in terms of the IPC classifications and declaration of an emergency by the government of Kenya.

In Somaliland, between June 2016 and January 2017 the IPC classification was at 'crisis' levels for more than half of Sanaag region (and at 'stressed' levels for the remainder) and at 'stressed' levels for Toghddeer region. The IPC classification then moved up a level in these areas from February 2017, reaching 'emergency' and even 'famine' levels in Sanaag and 'crisis' level for most of Toghddeer. ActionAid's phase 1 was again aligned with these worsening reports of food insecurity from February 2017. However, throughout 2016 there were ongoing reports of below average rain and increasing numbers of people becoming food insecure. Given that the government of Somaliland declared a drought emergency early in 2016 and the short 'Dehr' rains were predicted to be below average at the end of 2016, ActionAid's early warning indicators could be reviewed to decide what are the thresholds at which to launch a humanitarian response appeal, as it may have increased impact to have launched the phase 1 scaled-up food distributions and other activities earlier. At the same time, the timing of when to launch a response is can depend on multiple factors that may be out of the control of implementing agencies, such as when funding becomes available.

When considering the evaluation's 44 FGDs with affected communities in Kenya and Somaliland, the majority of these, especially in Kenya, said that they believed the assistance arrived at the right time – although most of these same groups said that they were in a desperate situation in the months before this. Further to this, it was definitively reported by around a third of the FGDs with the communities that impact would have increased if some areas of assistance could have taken place earlier from January 2017, such as the food assistance and destocking of livestock before they became too weak. This may have been possible to assess as the short rains at the end of 2016 were predicted to be below average or fail across the region ⁷⁴.

Integration of ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature ⁷⁵

ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature states that ActionAid's presence and relation with local organisations in communities is enhanced through our responses. This approach meant that ActionAid was already embedded in the communities affected by the drought and, through partnerships with Women's Networks and other organisations, could identify indicators of the crisis. This meant that the response could be more rapidly and fluidly launched (and led by the partners) from late 2016 and then scaled up by mid-March 2017.

⁷⁴ FEWSNET WFP NDMA 'Kenya Food Security Outlook June 2016 – January 2017'

<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/KE%20FSO%20June_Final.pdf>

⁷⁵ ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature has four main components; accountability to affected communities, shifting the power, women's leadership and sustainability and resilience.

Results

Effectiveness and impact

How many people have been reached? (OECD/DAC)

The table below summarises the number of individuals reached by each sector area of the response across Kenya and Somaliland, with many people being reached with more than one type of assistance (eg. food and water assistance through distributions and protection services). The table also includes the number of unique beneficiaries in the final row, counting each person once. Table 2 in the methodology section of this report also gives the number of unique beneficiaries by county/region.

Table 8: Summary of the number of people affected by the response by sector area, with unique beneficiaries

Kenya		Somaliland	
Food security	16,808	Food security	7500
WASH (mainly water)	22,389	WASH (mainly water)	35,940
NFIs	4,794	NFIs	992
Protection	1670	Protection	3,818
Nutrition	50,138	Cash and vouchers	900
Accountability	101,010	Accountability	13,860
Unique beneficiaries⁷⁶	94,301	Unique beneficiaries⁷⁷	35,940

It can be seen that between mid-March to September 2017 there were 94,301 unique beneficiaries in Kenya and 35,940 in Somaliland. In Kenya, assistance related to food security and nutrition reached the highest number of people. WASH related assistance, mainly water and water purification tablet distributions, reached the most in Somaliland, followed by food security. In both contexts, accountability to affected populations reached a relatively high number of people as this was a cross-cutting theme integrated across the programme activities.

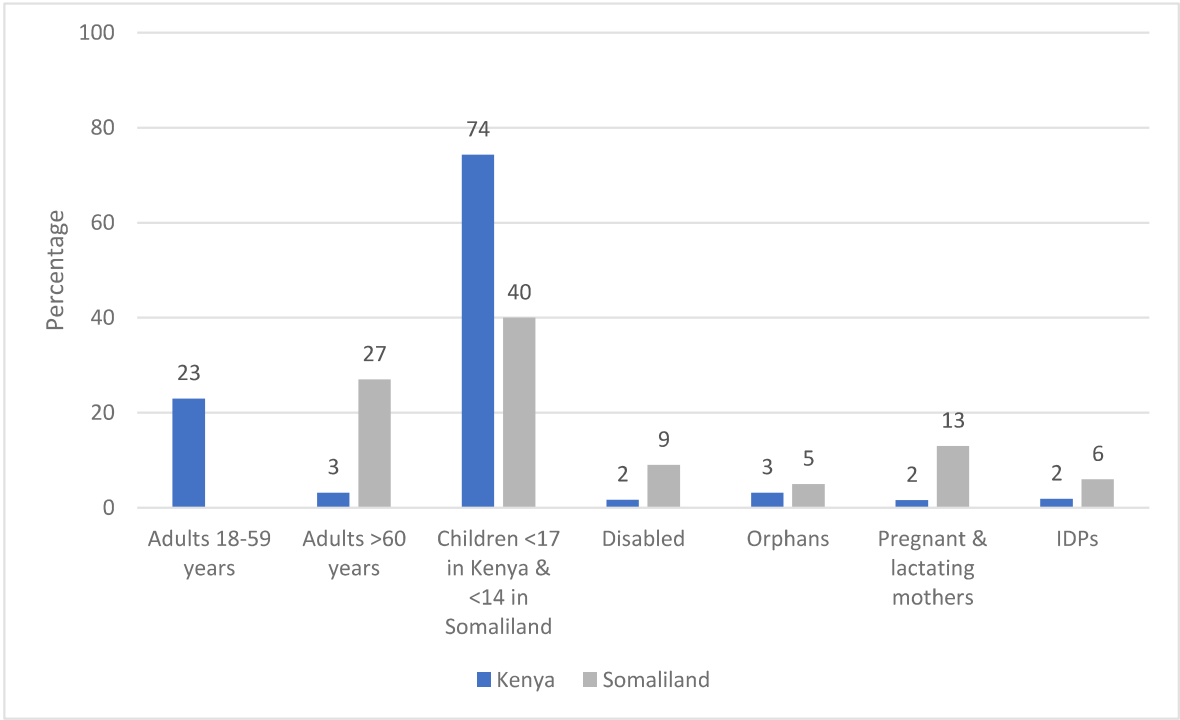
In terms of the disaggregation of the beneficiary communities, the figure below highlights the information about the main beneficiary groups in relation to the food assistance, according to the available programme data. These figures are for all response counties/regions in Kenya and Somaliland included in the response (from the mid-point of the response in Somaliland and from the end point in Kenya – there may have been additional groups that were included)⁷⁸.

⁷⁶ActionAid DEC phase 1 final output report, confirmed by the Programme Managers. Total figure assumes six people per household, according to UNDP and UNFPA statistics.

⁷⁷Ibid

⁷⁸ActionAid Kenya and Somaliland programme data.

Figure 1: Main beneficiary groups receiving assistance during the phase 1 response in Kenya and Somaliland



The total number of beneficiaries in Kenya and Somaliland was based on the average of six people per household. In both cases, individuals were selected based on vulnerability criteria decided by the communities and partners, facilitated by ActionAid. As can be seen, children under seventeen years old were the largest group overall in Kenya, comprising of 74% of the total beneficiaries, followed by adults aged 18-59 years. The largest group in Somaliland was children under fourteen comprising of 40% of beneficiaries in Somaliland. The second largest group in Somaliland was people over 60 years old at 27% and the third largest group was pregnant and lactating women, at 13%.

In Somaliland, these three groups also reflected the responses of communities with a key trend being that these were three most vulnerable groups to the drought conditions. In Kenya, the other groups all comprised of between 2% and 3% of beneficiaries. ActionAid also aimed to ensure that the proportions of the different groups reflected the demographics of the populations, based on the available information. The amount of assistance was designed so other members of the households of each of these groups also benefited from the assistance, as they were considered to be vulnerable households overall.

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Effectiveness and impact

To what extent were the objectives achieved? (OECD/DAC)

Each of the response outcome areas contains a list of detailed outputs, with targets by each sub-location or district included in the programme. These can be viewed in the tables below with the planned targets and results for each output, for each of the five response counties and Kenya and for all three response regions in Somaliland. The results show that each planned output was met or exceeded during the six-month phase 1 response from mid-March to September 2017 ⁷⁹.

Factors enabling the achievement of outcomes



Members of the community collecting food assistance in Somaliland

⁷⁹ActionAid final output reports for the phase 1 response.

There were several factors identified in the evaluation that were indicated as contributing to the success of meeting the planned outcomes and outputs, which were all either met or exceeded in the phase 1 response.

- The overall and key needs of the communities and priorities for the assistance were identified to ensure that the decisions were evidence-based. This included gathering information about the needs and priorities of the affected communities (mainly through committees, local leaders and interviews with community members in places). This information was triangulated with rapid needs assessments and coordination with government bodies and technical forums. ActionAid programme staff have prioritised the voices of the affected communities, especially women.
- The leadership of community based partners, mainly led by women, enabled timely response, reduced localised conflict relating to the assistance, revived the culture of community support system and ensured reach to the most marginalised families⁸⁰.
- ActionAid working in partnership with Women's Networks/partners who were embedded in the communities meant that the partners were able to continue to identify needs on an ongoing basis and alert ActionAid to any 'spikes' of needs, such as cholera outbreaks, high incidence of malnutrition or influxes of people searching for assistance or better circumstances.
- ActionAid was flexible to respond to such spikes of needs during the response as possible, often providing additional assistance in conjunction with other actors.
- ActionAid had the funding to be able to rapidly scale up the initial assistance in March 2017, following the granting of appeal funds from the DEC.
- The previous experience of ActionAid with the communities affected by the drought meant that ActionAid already had a solid base of knowledge about the dynamics of the communities, the needs, protection risks and the most vulnerable areas.
- The evaluation found a trend that the communities were satisfied with the frequency of the food and water assistance was also relevant, in that it provided a regular ration and allowed communities to manage resources. This was also verified in the Somaliland in a Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) survey in September 2017.

Factors that did not enable the achievement of outcomes:

- Following the last point above, there was an issue of coverage of the assistance. There was a trend amongst beneficiaries included in the 20 FGDs in Somaliland who said that although food assistance had the greatest impact, it should be scaled up as there were many more households in their communities that were impacted by the drought but were not included as beneficiaries. Also, the PDM survey in September 2017 in Somaliland found that 65% of beneficiary households shared their assistance with one other household as the needs were very high. The indication from the evaluation and the PDM are that coverage for emergency assistance should be reviewed in Somaliland and, depending on resources, increased.

⁸⁰Key information interviews with partner organisations and a key trend found in the FGDs with the communities.

Results

- Although the outcomes and outputs were achieved, there are still lessons that can be drawn from the programme in terms of delivering quality, as noted in the section above on 'relevance'. For example, all of the 44 FGD groups with affected populations said that they were involved in the broad design of the response through partners and community leaders. However, 10 of the 24 FGDs in Kenya wished to give more detailed input and have beneficiary selection criteria updated for each type of assistance – and give their feedback directly to ActionAid. Six of the 20 FGDs in Somaliland (all in Togdheer region) said that they had not had the opportunity to give any input at all (4 with women and 2 with men), although they had received assistance.

Table 9: Summary of outputs and achievements in Kenya

Outcome A: Most vulnerable drought affected communities have access to lifesaving food support					
Output	Sector	Indicator	Target	Achieved	Comment
1.1 Most vulnerable drought affected people receive essential food items	Food	No. of people receiving food parcels	12,008	12,008	
1.2 Vulnerable school children receive essential food	Food	Number of people receiving food	7944	7944	Same households as beneficiaries for output 1.1
1.3 Vulnerable drought affected pastoralists receive cash and food from destocking	Food	Number of people receiving cash for livestock	200	1200	Same beneficiaries as for outputs 1.1/1.2
1.2 Vulnerable school children receive essential food	Food	Individuals receive cash for desilting 2 dams	800	4800	Unique beneficiaries
Outcome B: Drought affected communities have access to potable water to save lives and protect against water-borne disease outbreaks					
Output	Sector	Indicator	Target	Achieved	Comment
2.1. Vulnerable drought affected people have access to functioning water points	WASH	Number of people with access to a source of safe drinking-water	13,389	13,389	Same beneficiaries as outcome A (outputs 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3)
2.2 Vulnerable drought affected people have access to water through trucking	WASH	Number of people with access to a source of safe drinking-water	6000	6000	In Garissa County only. Unique beneficiaries.
2.3 Vulnerable drought affected people have access to water purifying tablets	WASH	Number of people receiving direct hygiene promotion	9000	9000	This output excludes mass media campaigns and is without double-counting. Includes 3000 beneficiaries from previous outputs and 6000 unique, new beneficiaries.

Outcome C: Women and girls have improved safety, dignity and reduced risk of GBV

Output	Sector	Indicator	Target	Achieved	Comment
3.1 Vulnerable women and girls receive essential sanitary items	NFI	Number of people receiving NFI (dignity kits)	4794	4794	Beneficiaries overlap with Outcomes A & B.
3.2 Women and girls at risk of GBV have access to psychosocial support and referral (legal and medical)	Protection	Number of people accessing GBV services	1370	1330	Overlap with Outcomes A & B and with 3.1
3.3 Community-based protection mechanisms mobilised and trained	Protection	Number of people trained in protection	340	340	Unique beneficiaries. Not general population, but members of the existing Gender Violence Working Groups/ Women's Forums

Outcome D: Vulnerable drought affected people (including women and older and disabled people) actively participate in planning, prioritisation, design and review of ActionAid's, the governments' and other actors' response to ensure it is accountable to affected populations

Output	Sector	Indicator	Target	Achieved	Comment
4.1 Vulnerable people and groups participate in planning and design of response	Accountability to affected populations	Number of people consulted before designing the response	1723	1723	Community members and representatives (including vulnerable individuals/groups - women, older and disabled people) involved in beneficiary selection, needs assessment, priority setting, and validation of response plan
4.2 Drought affected people receive critical information about ActionAid's, the governments' and other actors' response	Accountability to affected populations	Number of information products distributed to the affected population through a variety of mechanisms on programme planning and progress	50,505	50,505	Relates to beneficiaries engaged across the whole response
4.3 Communities have access to participatory and formal review and feedback mechanisms	Accountability to affected populations	Feedback received through the review process	50,505	50,505	Same beneficiaries estimates as for output 4.2

Results

Outcome E: Malnourished children under 5, pregnant and lactating women receiving life-saving support

Output	Sector	Indicator	Target	Achieved	Comment
5.1 Most vulnerable children and women (lactating and expectant mothers) screened for malnutrition	Nutrition	Number of children and lactating and expectant mothers screened for acute malnutrition	50,138	50,138	45,038 are unique beneficiaries
5.2 Most vulnerable children and women (lactating and expectant mothers) provide with malnutrition treatment	Nutrition	Number of cases with moderate acute malnutrition receiving treatment	2000	2000	Same beneficiaries as output 5.1 (malnutrition screening) and overlaps with outcome B (output 2.3)
5.3 Most vulnerable children and women (lactating and expectant mothers) malnourished receive food vouchers	Nutrition	Number of people receiving vouchers for food	2000	2000	Same beneficiaries as output 5.1 (malnutrition screening)

Table 10: Summary of outputs and achievements in Somaliland

Outcome A: Improved food access for vulnerable drought affected households

Output	Sector	Indicator	Target	Achieved	Comment
1.1 Most vulnerable drought affected people receive essential food items	Food	No. of people receiving food parcels	7500	7500	

Outcome B: Increase water access through water provision and storage solutions

Output	Sector	Indicator	Target	Achieved	Comment
2.1 Most vulnerable drought affected people receive water through trucking	WASH ⁸¹	Number of people with access to a source of safe drinking-water	216	216	Ceel Afweyn, Sanaag. Distribution of purification tablets in response to a cholera outbreak
2.2a Most vulnerable drought affected people increase their water storage capacity	WASH	Number of people benefitting from rubber sheets (in pit in ground) of 42 cubic metres (able to store equiv. 201 barrels of water)	3000	4410	Additional sheets were distributed as there were left over sheets
2.2b Most vulnerable drought affected people increase their water storage capacity	WASH	Number of people benefitting from water storage tanks	1800	1800	This output excludes mass media campaigns and is without double-counting. Includes 3000 beneficiaries from previous outputs and 6000 unique, new beneficiaries.
2.3 Most vulnerable drought affected people benefit from cash for work (desilting)	WASH	Number of people receiving cash for work	660	660	Unique beneficiaries
2.4 Most vulnerable drought and AWD/ Cholera affected people receive cleaner drinking water	WASH	Number of people with access to a source of safe drinking water through provision of aqua tabs	3600	35,040	The aqua tabs were received with discounted price from Population service international (PSI) and this is what caused the increase of number of beneficiaries. 720 received water filters.

Outcome C: Improved access to basic needs assistance for extremely vulnerable drought affected people

3.1 People in an extremely vulnerable situation benefit from cash assistance	Cash transfer and vouchers	Number of people receiving cash	900	900	Sanaag region.
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⁸¹WASH: Water, Sanitation, Hygiene

Results

Outcome D: Improved safety, dignity and reduced risk of GBV for women and girls

Output	Sector	Indicator	Target	Achieved	Comment
4.1 Vulnerable women and girls receive essential sanitary items	NFI	Number of people receiving NFIs (dignity kits)	389	992	482 extra women and girls received dignity kits one time due to the re-planned balance left in DEC-phase1 activities. The increase of beneficiaries was also caused by the price reduction of dignity kits per person against the planned rate.
4.2 Women and girls at risk of GBV have access to GBV prevention awareness services	Protection	Number of people accessing and attending GBV awareness services in the established safe spaces for women	3818	3818	
4.3 Women and girls at risk of GBV have access to referral systems (legal and medical)	Protection	Number of GBV cases referred to relevant authorities	28	4	

Outcome E: Improved accountability through vulnerable drought affected people actively participating in planning and designing the response (including women, older people and disabled people)

Output	Sector	Indicator	Target	Achieved	Comment
5.1 Beneficiaries and communities have access to participatory and formal review	Accountability to affected populations	Number of people consulted before designing the response (or whilst implementing the response)	13,860	13,860	
5.2 Beneficiaries and communities have access to feedback mechanisms	Accountability to affected populations	Number of pieces of feedback received (including complaints) that have been acted upon		78	

The OECD/DAC standard for 'impact' includes the following questions:

- What has happened as a result of the programme or project?
- What real difference has the activity made to the beneficiaries?

When evaluating impact, this section is framed the phase 1 response outcomes:

1. Improved food access for vulnerable drought affected households.
2. Increase water access through water provision and storage solutions.
3. Improved safety, dignity and reduced risk of GBV for women and girls.
4. Improved accountability to vulnerable drought affected people.
5. Malnourished children under 5, pregnant and lactating women receiving life-saving support (Baringo and Isiolo counties in Kenya through partnership with Action Contre La Faim (ACF) and the County Nutrition Teams)

Outcomes 1 and 2. Improved food access for vulnerable drought affected households and increase water access through water provision and storage solutions.

In both Kenya and Somaliland, the drought had affected men, women, boys and girls – and different groups within these. During the initial planning stages ActionAid identified that several groups, such as pregnant and lactating women and pastoralists, were particularly at risk in terms of access to food and water, as well as the impact lack of access could potential have on them.



Member of the community in Tangulbei, Baringo county, Kenya, undergoing registration before receiving a food distribution

In Kenya, the response aimed to provide food assistance through distributions to 16,808 individuals in communities and 7,944 school children, with water trucking, water sources and water purification tablets reaching 28,389 individuals. In Somaliland, the response aimed to provide food distributions to 7500 individuals (1250 households), comprising of 450 metric tons of culturally acceptable food in Sanaag, Togdheer and Waqooyi Galbeed regions.

Specific beneficiary selection criteria were developed by local community leaders and community committees for different aspects of the assistance, facilitated by the partners and ActionAid. For example, in Kenya, the criteria for the food assistance included; households that were only consuming one meal per day or one meal per two days, no livelihood or very informal labour, child headed household, the elderly and women only households.

Results

The food parcels distributed were aligned with an adapted FSNAU/CWG minimum expenditure basket and sphere standards respectively ⁸², which state every person, should access 2100kcal per day ⁸³. Water trucking and water purification tablets reached 35,040 individuals. Further to this, the response reached 6000 individuals with cash in Kenya and 1560 individuals in Somaliland, though destocking of livestock, cash for work initiatives or cash assistance for particularly vulnerable individuals. There are several examples demonstrating how ActionAid coordinated with other actors in the planning of the assistance. For example, ActionAid Somaliland was closely engaged with the food security and cash working groups to harmonise approaches and payment rates, as well as aiming to minimise any overlap.

During the independent evaluation of this assistance, members of the affected communities and other key stakeholders were asked what they believed the most important areas of humanitarian assistance were, in terms of what provided the greatest impact. These were ranked in order of one to three, with one being the most important assistance and three being the third most important assistance.

Impact area one

In Kenya and Somaliland, a key trend revealed from a synthesis results from the 44 focus group discussions and seasonal timelines with men and women from affected communities in different sub-locations was that food and water insecurity were the greatest challenge in the dry seasons and periods of drought. The seasonal timelines, utilised in the 44 FGDs with communities, showed trends that before the phase 1 response began in mid-March 2017, the following main coping strategies were used. There were no trends of differences in responses between men and women.

Negative coping mechanism:

- Parents and carers skipping meals so children can eat.
- Walking long distances to reach food and/or water (both with and without livestock).
- Eating meat from dead livestock.
- Children not attending school due to school fees/children need to search for water.
- Walking long distances to health facilities.
- Increasing risk of early child marriage, eg. due to the dowry.
- Cutting trees and collecting wood to burn and sell charcoal.

Neutral/positive coping mechanisms:

- In September, in Baringo and West Pokot counties, Kenya, some agro-pastoralist communities are able to consume crops from the August harvest.
- Selling livestock for cash for food and school fees (but selling prices tend to be low).
- Households collaborating together to find solutions.
- Village elders intervening in cases of cattle raids and trying to resolve the issues between different villages
- Relying on food distributions from humanitarian organisations and the government.

⁸²ActionAid (2017) DEC phase 1 response final report. October.

⁸³The Sphere Project <www.spherehandbook.org/en/food-security-food-transfers-standard-1-general-nutrition-requirements/> consulted March 2018.

The results of the seasonal timelines show that after March 2017, the negative coping mechanisms were not nearly as prevalent or completely disappearing. The negative coping mechanism that was still present was 'walking long distances to health facilities' – this is an area of need but was not in the scope of the response. It was also reported in all but one of the FGDs that the food assistance resulted in the greatest positive impact during the phase 1 response, as these were responding to a critical need, followed by water assistance.

In terms of the neutral/positive coping mechanisms, these were still present during the phase 1 response period as the underlying challenges were still present (such as disputes over land and cattle). In the case of receiving assistance from other organisations, this was present in some areas and it was considered that this was definitely needed but it was not sufficient to meet the needs of the affected households. Several FGDs reported that ActionAid was the only agency still supporting them until September 2017, they said that most other agencies had disappeared by that point.

The FGDs also revealed trends in specific ways that the food distributions had made a difference to the lives of the people in the affected communities. According to the FGDs, a key trend was that this was by enabling better nutrition, especially affecting children and pregnant and lactating women who were noted as a particularly vulnerable group, as well as improved living standards for households in terms of having more energy for activities such as farming. A FGD with women from Chepkalacha sub-location in Kenya said: *“the food distributed meant that households could afford to eat at least twice or three times a day”*. The FGD group with women in the IDP camp in Tangelbei said that: *“we saw that malnourished children gained weight”*. The FGD group in the IDP camp in Baringo said: *“we would not have lived if it wasn't for the food distributions from ActionAid”*.

In Somaliland, all of the 20 FGD groups from districts in Sanaag and Togdheer regions said that the food distributions had the greatest impact on their lives. Much like in Kenya, this also included several of the 20 FGD groups with communities in Somaliland that had said that they would have preferred the food distributions to start from January 2017, following the rainy season at the end of 2016 that had produced below average rains (and rain failure in some areas). However, they still considered the food distributions to be the most important. It was reported widely in the FGDs that before the distributions malnutrition rates were increasing. *“We didn't have anything to eat, no money, no water, no shelters, no money, the animals died and we didn't even have transportation to look for somewhere better”* (FGD with women, Ceel Afweyn, Sanaag region, Somaliland). *“When we are speaking together we say “if ActionAid hadn't been here we wouldn't be alive”* (second FGD with women, Ceel Afweyn, Sanaag region, Somaliland).

Food shortages were a key issue in Somaliland during the time of the response, potentially exacerbated by several communities experiencing movement of populations into their community areas looking for food or work. As noted at the start of this section, the role of the partner organisations is particularly key in such circumstances to enable ActionAid to keep updated on the situation and the number of people affected.

Of the 43 FGDs that said the food assistance had the greatest impact, this also included several of the 24 FGD groups that had said that they would have preferred the assistance to start from January 2017, following the rainy season at the end of 2016 that had produced below average rains (and rain failure in some areas). Despite the scaled-up food distributions starting later than they needed them to, they still considered this the most important aspect of the response.

Results

Following the response, the evaluation conducted eight FGDs with approximately 80 teachers and head teachers representing numerous primary schools that were included in this aspect of the programme. They were based on the sample of three counties included in the evaluation; Baringo, West Pokot and Garissa. They also noted that the drought was a key factor affected children's access to school, as well as children from areas experiencing insecurity due to conflict being vulnerable to this. One of the reasons why conflict is arising in Kenya includes conflict over increasingly limited water and pasture resources for livestock ⁹⁰. *"Increase in enrolment and retention in schools from conflict affected areas due to high number of children not attending school. Prolonged drought has meant that the government supported food could not last a whole term and high cases of malnutrition were reported in 2017"* (Head Teachers from Tangelbei sub-location in Baringo county). The evaluation team has concluded that such insecure areas place additional pressures on those households in terms of sustaining livelihoods/household wealth, as well as the increased risk of children travelling/walking to school through such areas.

When considering the impact of the food distributions to schools, following a synthesis of the 24 FGDs with communities, this was ranked as the second biggest impact of the response as it resulted, in their view, in an increase in school attendance rates. Several FGD groups stated the reason for this as being households were previously being forced to prioritise spending on food, water and health due to the drought conditions – and not education. The school meals were a draw for households as they knew that children in school would be able to access a meal during the school day.

These results that indicated an increase in school attendance rates was triangulated with information from other sources. During a FGD with teachers from Kamuthe Primary School in Garissa county, they agreed: "the meals programme has boosted school enrolment and enabled more children to come to school". The FGD with teachers from Warable Primary School, also in Garissa county also reported: "the assistance was really needed – although it would have been better if it could have come earlier in the dry season".

There was a trend of key informants confirming this view, including ActionAid staff and partner organisations who all reported an increase in school attendance during the school meals programme.

Following this feedback, ActionAid's Capacity Building Coordinators in Baringo/West Pokot and Garissa assisted the evaluation team by collating figures for school attendance from a sample of the schools included in the distributions. These are presented in the table below and to increase the reliability of these figures several steps were taken:

- Recording of attendance from a range of schools with dates exactly one year apart. This was to reduce any possible confounding factors, such as seasonal factors affecting attendance (especially in pastoral households).
- As the drought conditions were having an impact the year before, with counties being in either 'stressed' or 'crisis' mode in terms of the IPC food security classification (although not as severely as in 2017), it was aimed that the comparison of these two points in time eliminate other potentially confounding factors that could influence school attendance.
- Collecting attendance figures from a range of schools has increased the chance of seeing trends and reducing the impact of any outliers in the results.
- The figures have been complemented by a detailed analysis of the evaluation data from FGDs and KIIs. This has resulted in the endorsement of these figures and enabled a search for any possible factors that could potentially affect/confound these figures (although none were found).

⁹⁰Data collected by UNICEF reported in 'Horn of Africa: A Call for Action, February 2017' <<https://reliefweb.int/node/1906393>>.

Table 11: Differences in school attendance before and after the phase 1 response

County	Name of Primary School	Attendance 1st July 2016	Attendance 1st July 2017	Difference in figures	Percentage increase
Baringo	Tangulbei	401	528	127	24 %
	Churo	560	703	143	20 %
	Kokwototo	271	350	79	23 %
West Pokot	Kongelai	312	387	75	19 %
	Lokna Holistic	495	570	75	13 %
	Kitelakapel	389	478	89	19 %
Baringo	Nadir	418	518	100	19 %
	Abagdera	263	353	90	25 %
	Warable	510	590	80	14 %
	Kamuthe	589	678	89	13 %
			Average % increase:		19 %

The figures above from ten primary schools across the three counties included in the evaluation show an average 19% increase in school attendance from 1 July 2016 to 1 July 2017. The food distributions to schools began in April 2017 – they were ongoing for three months before the attendance figures on 1 July 2017 were recorded. As a range of stakeholders engaged in the response have attributed this to the food distribution and the evaluation could not identify any confounding factors, it is strongly indicated that the 19% increase in school attendance from 2016 to 2017 is due to the phase 1 response. The figure below also illustrates the differences in attendance for each school included in the sample, between 1 July 2016 (dark blue columns) to 1 July 2017 (grey columns).

Results

Impact area 2:

In Kenya, food assistance was provided to schools for children's school meals, with 19,954 children benefiting from the programme⁸⁴. In the three counties of Baringo, West Pokot and Garissa that have been included in this evaluation, with 16,354 school children benefited. These distributions were linked by the communities, head teachers/teachers and the key informants included in the evaluation to increases in school attendance. There were many accounts of how lack of food in the households meant that households needed to prioritise purchases of food, drinking water and health care over education. The impact of food assistance to schools is described in greater detail later in this section.

In Somaliland, the distributions of water were considered to be the second biggest impact overall, especially by the affected communities, with a trend from the FGDs being that the water helped individuals to survive the dry periods. An individual in a FGD with women in Sanaag region said: "before the response the hunger was killing us and we were walking miles to get water and water containers – we did not have anything to carry water in". During a key informant interview with Abdalle Mohamed Jama from partner organisations SOWDA, Hargiesa, said: Safe drinking water was made readily available during the response and reduced the number of diarrhea cases".

Each of Chair People of the three partner organisations (Women's Networks) in Kenya who were interviewed as key informants during the evaluation also described the impact of the food and water distributions in the communities. For example: "Saving lives with food and water distributions, including water for livestock and storage tanks, was the most important impact. It also meant that women do not have to walk as far for water. There not enough food or clean water and those who are depending on livestock are moving around to search for pasture and water – it is dry everywhere. This also leads to community conflict". The three partner organisations who were interviewed in Kenya said that the food and water distributions saved lives, including water for livestock. Additionally they said that this meant that women and children did not have to walk as far for water, also a protection risk. This outcome of not having to walk as far for water was also identified in ActionAid's Real Time Evaluation in Kenya at the mid-point of the phase 1 response. However, this was not noted by the communities in the final evaluation – this does not necessarily mean that reduced distance to water was not an impact but just that other impacts, such as the life-saving aspect, took greater precedence.

Impact area 3:

There were two jointly-third biggest impacts cited by men and women in Kenya, firstly the provision of water trucking to schools (water used for drinking and cooking), as well as water purification tablets to households. The other was that women were empowered by the different aspects of the response and the focus on the role of women in leadership and decision-making roles. The FGD with women in Kopulio sub-location said: "women were empowered and started making decisions in the absence of men, due to training they received from ActionAid. Women became empowered and start to participate in economic activities".

In Somaliland, the third greatest impact area was due to the cash for work initiatives and there were reports of individuals working together on initiatives that would help the whole community. An FGD with men from Sanaag region said; "the cash for work also meant we could create water holding points, which helps to prevent soil erosion".

Further to this, in both contexts ActionAid's partner organisations described how they have seen more women in communities empowered and engaged in decision making and implementing activities such as distributions. The partners also emphasized how quality of life for women and girls also improved due to the distributions of the dignity kits.

Integration of ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature⁸⁵

ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature states that ActionAid's presence and relation with local organisations in communities are enhanced through our responses and we build local capacity.

This has guided the general programme work of ActionAid and meant that partner organisations were able to move rapidly into emergency mode. The partners have had key roles in the identification of needs and priorities, as well as beneficiary selection with village leaders and leading the implementation of the assistance.

This evaluation has concluded that the response was primarily led by partner organisations within the communities. This is likely to have meant that the genuine needs and most vulnerable households were prioritised – although further research would be needed to provide definitive answers in this area.

Distribution of food to schools for school meals (Kenya)

Further to the impacts described above, the food security element of the response also included distributions of food to primary schools (children normally from age 7, potentially up to age 17) in Kenya, with the partner organisations leading the distributions. The focus of the school meals was to enable children access their basic right to education and increase retention. The focus was on providing one meal a day to the school children, with the aim that children would be enabled to continue to stay in school, allowing children to both access their basic right to education and to safe spaces. 19,954 children benefited from the programme in total during the DEC phase 1 response⁸⁶, with 16,354 children benefitting in the three counties of Baringo, West Pokot and Garissa that were included in the evaluation.

During consultations with communities and partner organisations before the phase 1 humanitarian response was launched, ActionAid identified that the drought conditions were negatively affecting primary school attendance rates and that the food insecurity had led to negative coping mechanisms such as skipping meals, many having only one unbalanced meal, child labour to supplement family access to food and children dropping out of school (examples were given of children migrating to urban areas to find work). Children (especially girls) were often being pulled out of schools or dropping out to assist at home as women's burden of care was increasing⁸⁷. This was also identified as being an issue by UNICEF following collection of data in February 2017, who found that 175,000 were not attending school primarily due to the drought conditions⁸⁸. County Governments in Kenya, in partnership with WFP, do provide to schools for meals (supporting 1.5 million children in Kenya every school day)⁸⁹ but it was noted by head teachers during the evaluation that this is not always enough to last a whole term.

⁸⁵ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature has four main components; accountability to affected communities, shifting the power, women's leadership and sustainability and resilience.

⁸⁶ActionAid Kenya (2017) Disaster Response Phase 1 Final Report to the Disasters Emergency Committee. October.

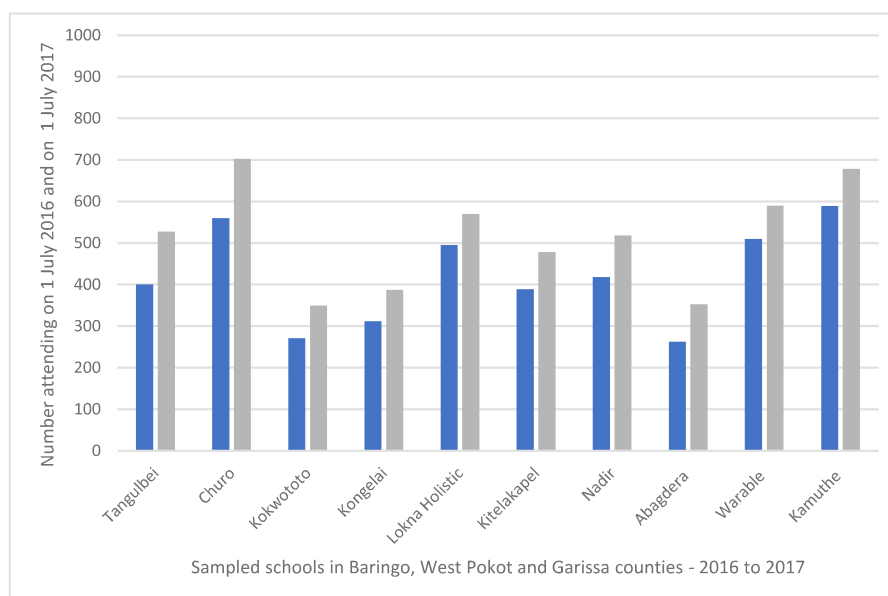
⁸⁷ActionAid (2017) DEC Phase 1 Plan, East Africa (April).

⁸⁸Data collected by UNICEF reported in 'Horn of Africa: A Call for Action, February 2017' <<https://reliefweb.int/node/1906393>>.

⁸⁹World Food Programme (2017) School Meals Remain Indispensable in Kenya <<http://m.wfp.org/stories/school-meals-remain-indispensable-kenya>>.

Results

Figure 2: Differences in attendance in a sample of schools that participated in food distributions, between 1 July 2016 to 1 July 2017.



Integration of ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature⁹¹

The signature commits to linking emergency response to resilience building and longer-term, sustainable change. Including empowering individuals and addressing inequalities through all of our development programming.

The ability for children to access and attend school is of paramount importance to this. Non-attendance or dropping out has been shown to increase protection concern, such as harmful labour conditions, trafficking and abuse⁹². It is widely recognised that countries need strong education systems that promote learning, life skills, and social cohesion. Education is one key dimension that can also help mitigate the risks of adversity and help children and youth to succeed despite severe challenges⁹³.

Therefore, the school meals aspect of the humanitarian response has contributed to this aim, being both in line and guided by the signature guiding the response by linking emergency response to resilience building and longer-term, sustainable change, which education is an integral part of.

WFP also works with the Government of Kenya in some counties to provide cash for school meals in areas where markets are available, instead of in-kind assistance of food distributions. This approach aims to curb malnutrition, support education achievements, as well as supporting/stimulating local agricultural production and small-holder farmers⁹⁴. Following the confirmation of about impact of ActionAid's school meals assistance on attendance, ActionAid could build on this and apply assistance for school meals mirroring WFP's model in locations that have the right conditions (eg. available food markets, accessible food prices and small holder farmers). This would be especially applicable during any future resilience programming to reduce the impact of shocks like drought on the livelihoods of farmers and growers, as well as on school attendance.

⁹¹ ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature has four main components; accountability to affected communities, shifting the power, women's leadership and sustainability and resilience.

⁹² UNICEF Ethiopia (2016) Horn of Africa, A Call to Action <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/HOA_CALL_FOR_ACTION_Leaflet_Feb2017_1.pdf>.

⁹³ World Bank Group (2016) Education Global Practices; Education Resilience Approaches <http://wbfiles.worldbank.org/documents/hdn/ed/saber/supporting_doc/brief/SABER_EDR_Brief.pdf>.

⁹⁴ World Food Programme (2017) School Meals Remain Indispensable in Kenya <<http://m.wfp.org/stories/school-meals-remain-indispensable-kenya>>.

Outcome 3. Improved safety, dignity and reduced risk of GBV for women and girls.

This outcome area included three key outputs in Kenya and Somaliland;

- Community-based protection mechanisms mobilised and trained (number of people trained in protection services).
- Women and girls at risk of GBV have access to psychosocial support and referral, both legal and medical; (number of people accessing GBV services).
- Women and girls at risk of GBV have access to GBV prevention awareness services (number of people accessing and attending GBV awareness services in the established safe spaces for women).

Due to ActionAid's longstanding work with communities throughout East Africa, ActionAid had extensive knowledge about the protection risks and concerns faced within communities. Due to previous experience of responding to multiple crises in the region and work



Women trained in protection services raising awareness in Somaliland

with partner organisations, ActionAid was aware that during emergencies protection issues become increasingly serious. Decreasing access to food and water, illegal land grabbing, lack of sanitary facilities and conflict over resources are major common problems exacerbating GBV prevalence affecting women and children, domestic violence, child labour, girls and boys dropping out of school and early child marriage.^{95 96} In addition, this has also provided the rationale for the ActionAid Humanitarian Signature, as well as the protection clusters in each country context focusing on such protection issues⁹⁷.

This section will address each of the main components of the protection component of the response and discuss achievements, as well as successes and lessons learnt in each area.

⁹⁵Key informant interviews with ActionAid UK and ActionAid Kenya programme staff.

⁹⁶Major trends from FGDs with communities in Kenya and Somaliland, when asked 'what were the main challenges faced before the response began?'.^{95 96}

⁹⁷Key informant interview (KII) with ActionAid UK

Results

Community-based protection mechanisms mobilised and trained (number of people trained in protection services):

The main protection components of the phase 1 response related to the development of protection services and GBV referral systems.

The community based protection mechanisms were established through the training of women based in partner organisations/Women's Networks and from the general community. The training was facilitated by ActionAid, who also brought in external specialists when needed. It covered elements such as GBV, FGM, child marriage and the negative impacts on individuals and society. The training also aimed to build the capacity of women groups to handle GBV survivors by providing basic psycho-social counselling and supporting GBV survivors into referrals.

The women who were trained then went on to train other women in raising awareness about protection risks. For example, this was reported by all of the five FGDs with women trained protection services in Kenya. "After we at the women's network had had our training in protection, we trained many other women as possible in churches and schools. We trained them about the disadvantages of FGM and early marriages. We saw them moving around the community talking to people about these issues" (FGD with women in Kongelai sub-location, West Pokot county, Kenya).

In addition to raising awareness about the protection risks, the women talked to people in the communities about the available referral systems for victims of GBV and other forms of abuse⁹⁸. The Kamuthe Women's Network in Garissa county, Kenya said in a key informant interview: *"If there are any GBV cases they normally come to the office in the which is open 24 hours. We try to support the family and speak to the husband if possible. We go into the communities and discuss the issues they have and support them"*.

Example of best practice:

During the training we developed a community action plan that was very explicit on the support for victims of gender based violence. We are planning to share the plan with the County Government for support and resourcing (FGD with women trained in protection services, Garissa county, Kenya).

One of the main modes of raising awareness about protection issues in Kenya and Somaliland was at safe spaces, which were set up in different localities for the distributions of the humanitarian assistance, such as food, dignity kits, sheets to catch water and water purification tablets. Decisions about the locations of the spaces, which included schools, community halls, under trees or within the IDP camps, were made by the partners in consultation with women in the communities. *"With the presence of safe space, women are organising awareness sessions and responding to GBV cases, which traditional leaders had been leading in the past"* (FGD with women in the community, Sanaag region, Somaliland).

During key informant interviews, the partners said that they planned the protection awareness sessions to take place on the same days as the distributions in order to reach as many people as possible. Although it was mainly women who attended awareness raising sessions, there were reports from ActionAid, the partners and the communities that a number of men attended sessions. The spaces were designed to areas where women could access the assistance safely - and it was normally distributed directly to the women in the households). They were also places where members of the communities could access psycho-social support or participate group discussions about the issues that affected them.

⁹⁸ KIs with partner organisations in Kenya and Somaliland.

One trend of note in the evaluation was that reductions in GBV had been observed in the communities, as well as changes in attitudes by men to FGM before marriage. This was particularly noted in Kenya by partners and the communities themselves. However, it is recommended that this is research further through a dedicated protection assessment.

- *"We have seen an increase in men understanding more about women empowerment. Women have become more confident about their rights and own property"* (FGD with women, Garissa county, Kenya).
- *"There is an increase in men are having a different way of thinking on women leadership. They are also able to marry uncut ladies, a significant change"* (FGD with women, Churo, Baringo, Kenya).
- *"There have been examples of local leaders standing up to gender based violence"* (FGD with women, Churo, Baringo, Kenya).
- *"More men are marrying women who have not undergone FGM. Also, more men are allowing girls to enroll in school. We believe there is a reduction in wife battering"* (FGD with women, Tangelbei, Baringo, Kenya).
- *"The number of girls in the school has increased due to discouragement of early marriage. Women are more able to make decisions in their households. The lifestyle of the community is changing as many women and men attended churches due to training being given to them"* (FGD with women, Kongelai, West Pokot county, Kenya).
- *We were trained on how to do refer a GBV to a service provider and to give moral support to the survivals. Now we campaign stopping young girls to undergo FGM in our village* (FGD with women trained in protection services, Beer, Togdheer region, Somaliland).
- *"A girl in our village was raped and the women's group got her to the hospital and helped her family, even though it wasn't their job"* (FGD with women in the community, Somaliland).

The main trend was that the protection services, such as raising awareness about GBV in communities, was that there has been no barriers to providing the services within the communities themselves, there were some examples of men discouraging the training. In a more extreme case, the following was said: "When the Women Network discovered that there is a girl who was going to be circumcised, after reaching the home, the parents of the girl threatened them and chased them away. Women Network's members were beaten by men in the community" (FGD with women, Kongelai, West Pokot, Kenya).

The table below summarises the number of women who were trained in the protection services, such as GBV awareness raising, prevention and response. In both contexts, the women who were trained may have been beneficiaries themselves, being identified as individuals who had been impacted by the drought conditions and facing food and water insecurity⁹⁹.

Table 12: Number of people trained in protection services in Kenya and Somaliland

Kenya		Somaliland	
County	Number trained	Region	Number trained
Baringo	30	Woqooyi Galbeed	150
West Pokot	30	Sanaag	240
Garissa	30	Togdheer	120
Total trained in Kenya	90	Total trained in Somaliland	510

⁹⁹ ActionAid Somaliland (2017) DEC phase 1 final output report. October.

Results

In terms of the quality of the training, there were several focus group discussions (FGDs) with the women who were trained. Overall they were happy with the training due to the factors listed below.

When asked what went well with the training, these were the main trends of responses from the programme in Kenya and Somaliland:

- The training was done in the local language so it was easy for all to understand.
- The training manual was easy to follow and facilitated learning.
- The facilitators were of good quality.
- Transport and accommodation was included, which made it easier to attend.
- The training increased our confidence to speak to males and elders in the community about GBV.

When asked what did not go well with the training, these were the main trends of responses from the programme in Kenya and Somaliland:

- Insecurity and conflict in the area close to the training.
- Poor mobile phone network made it hard to receive any updates about changes to the training.

Women and girls at risk of GBV have access to psychosocial support and referral, both legal and medical; (number of people accessing GBV services) and women and girls at risk of GBV have access to GBV prevention awareness services (number of people accessing and attending GBV awareness services in the established safe spaces for women):

The table below provides a summary of the number of women and girls at risk of GBV who accessed GBV prevention awareness services, as well as the number reached with protection referral services. The table shows that number who utilised the referral services was relatively low in Somaliland at 4, especially given that the target number of referrals was 28. There are still challenges to overcome in Somaliland in terms of cultural norms that do not favour reporting. The safe spaces in the different communities were also, in general, a new concept and it took time for women and girls to understand the role and value of these areas¹⁰⁰. It is recommended that the protection activities continue in communities as awareness is increasing but time is needed to fully realised their potential – especially as the activities have good prospects for sustainability in terms of them being primarily based on equipping people with knowledge and skills about the issues and the ability to then raise awareness, hold events, train others, provide pyhsco-social support and support families.

¹⁰⁰ActionAid Somaliland (2017) post distribution monitoring reports. KII with ActionAid Somaliland.

Table 13: Number of people who were reached with protection referral services¹⁰¹

Kenya		Somaliland	
Women and girls at risk of GBV have access to GBV prevention awareness services		Women and girls at risk of GBV have access to GBV prevention awareness services	
Baringo	135	Togdheer	1833
West Pokot	436	Sanaag	1069
Garissa	366		
Kilifi	766		
Total:	1703	Total:	2902
Number of GBV cases referred to the relevant authorities		Women and girls at risk of GBV have access to referral systems (legal and medical)	
Baringo	13	Togdheer	2
West Pokot	16	Sanaag	1
Garissa	11	Woqooyi Galbeed	1
Kilifi	16		
Total:	56	Total:	4

During the FGDs with the women trained in the protection services questions and KIs with other stakeholders, participants discussed any additional resources or elements that would enable them to enhance and expand the services. Two of the groups in Baringo county said: “there is a need for a rescue centre and transportation to enable us accommodate girls and women who severely suffer from GBV” (FGD with women in Tangulbei, Baringo county, Kenya and FGD with women in Churo, Baringo, Kenya). Also, “we need funding to assist with transport, venues and sustenance for the trainings” (FGD with women, Kongelai, West Pokot county, Kenya). “We need more training and to expand this project because if every women and girl realised their rights they can make a change” (FGD with women in Garissa county, Kenya and FGD with women, Ina af Madoob, Togdheer Region, Somaliland).

An ActionAid programme staff member said during a KI: “One lesson is that we need to increase the number of people trained to reach more people and benefit more communities. We have trained the right people and groups but we also need to include police in the training and health officials. For example, if a girl is raped she is taken to the police but the police need to be trained in how to manage such cases and also the health officials, so they support in the process of violence against women and girls. This is also to avoid stigmatisation that is an issue for rape victims. We need to sensitise the police to the fact that they will be dealing with vulnerable people who are traumatised”.

Integration of ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature¹⁰²

ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature says that; 'Women are often the worst affected in emergencies, as well as the first responders. We ensure power is shifted to women leaders in order to address existing power imbalances at all levels by promoting the leadership of women who are affected by crisis. This will also help mean that we will focus on women's rights programming, including protection programming, so that women have the space and agency to lead change programmes'.

¹⁰¹ActionAid DEC phase 1 final output report and confirmed in FGDs with women trained in protection services.

¹⁰²ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature has four main components; accountability to affected communities, shifting the power, women's leadership and sustainability and resilience.

Results

The phase 1 humanitarian response has built the capacity of women to lead the protection component of the response, as well as the distributions of food, water and NFIs. Due to ongoing dialogues with the communities and membership of technical forums, ActionAid is knowledgeable about the protection concerns within the communities affected by the drought and has prioritised this in the response. According to the women who receive the training, the training was delivered by good quality trainers in an accessible language. In the FGDs, they expressed motivation to roll out information campaigns and to support victims.

The leaders of the partner organisations were motivated to support women in the community who had been affected by issues such as GBV and gave several examples of case studies where they had supported women.

Accountability to affected populations

Communities and people affected by crisis know their rights and entitlements, have access to information and participate in decisions that affect them (CHS 4 and OECD/DAC)

The evaluation of the standard for relevance, earlier in this report, details how the populations in Kenya and Somaliland affected by the drought were engaged in the design and planning of the response in several ways. This section looks at this in more details, as well as other aspects of accountability that were integrated into the programme. These were planned to be as follows:

- Building on the capacity of partner organisations (women led) and communities to identify needs and priorities and beneficiary selection, facilitated by ActionAid (CHS 4 and OECD/DAC criteria).
- Communicating information to members of the community engaged in the response about the assistance, who it is for, dates and times of when it will be delivered and by which organisation (CHS 4 and OECD/DAC criteria).
- Maintenance and management ongoing feedback mechanisms and complaints mechanisms (specifically CHS 5 and OECD/DAC criteria).
- Building the capacity of communities to hold powerful actors to account (such as County Governments) and communicate their needs to such actors (CHS 4 and OECD/DAC criteria).

The section will address each of these points, to evaluate the extent to which affected communities were engaged in planning and decision making.

Building on the capacity of partner organisations (women led) and communities to identify needs and priorities, facilitated by ActionAid (CHS 4 and OECD/DAC criteria):

The partner organisations in Kenya and Somaliland had leading role in implementing the response, from the design phase to procurement and coordinating the humanitarian assistance through distributions, as well as training of other women in protection services. This sub-section also relates to Core Humanitarian 8 (Communities and people affected by crisis receive the assistance they require from competent and well-managed staff and volunteers), which is explained later in this report.

Women's Networks/Partners

ActionAid was already working with each of the partners before the phase 1 response began, as part of previous programme work. The programme staff in Kenya and Somaliland explained during the evaluation that they were already familiar with the capacities of the partners. However, in both contexts rapid reviews were undertaken to consider any gaps in the capacity by the partners and to carry out any necessary training. This was especially in the areas of protection in emergencies, GBV awareness, DEC review training, the Core Humanitarian Standard, the ActionAid Humanitarian Signature, codes of conduct and transparency and accountability.^{103 104} The ActionAid Somaliland Programme and Policy Manager explained: *"Although we knew the partners had been working with us on other projects, we engaged with the partners to see how they carried out their activities through field operation visits".* He also described a sustainable approach that was being taken to the training: *"ActionAid has engaged existing women's groups and where necessary facilitated establishment of new groups to take leading role in the identification of needs, selecting the most vulnerable households on set criteria, manage relief distribution, monitor beneficiary satisfaction and address or refer complaints".*

The partner organisations also talked about the impact of the capacity building training on the ability to contribute to the design of the response and lead the activities. *"We received much needed training, especially in the area of protection. However we would benefit from M&E in emergency settings. We also built the capacities of communities in relation to GBV protection and awareness, referral, reporting, how give feedback to us on distribution and the importance of women leadership. We also established social auditing communities"* (Abdale Mohamed Jama, WAAPO, Togdheer region, Somaliland). *"ActionAid invited our network to meetings for planning the proposal, budget and the humanitarian priorities. We like how ActionAid are transparent and closely with communities"* (Maka Kassim, Chairperson, Kamuthe Women's Network, Gariss county, Kenya).

Affected communities

The training also aimed to enable the partners organisations, often embedded within the affected communities, to identify the needs within the communities affected by the drought, as well as the selection of beneficiaries and implementation of the assistance. The partners gathered information either via local leaders and elders, through elected committees of community members or through interviews with people affected by the drought. The process of communities, especially the local leaders and committees participating in consultations and decision-making processes is anticipated to have built wider-community capacity through these experiences.

In terms of confirmation from partners and communities that they were included in the design of the response, the participants of all the 24 FGDs in Kenya and 20 in Somaliland said that they were involved in the broad design of the response. The main ways this happened was through community meetings with partner organisations/Women's Networks and Disaster Management Committees (also partners of ActionAid) in each county, with village chiefs or elected representatives from the community. Then community elders and chiefs identified the most vulnerable households and represented their needs to the Women's Network. ActionAid were then able to identify the most at-risk groups in the communities, as set out in the phase 1 response plans to the DEC. Following the beneficiary selection process, the final proportion of each group included in the response, across all of the assistance, is illustrated in the figure at the start of the results section.

¹⁰³ Key informant interviews with ActionAid Kenya

¹⁰⁴ Key informant interviews with ActionAid Somaliland

Results

However, although during the evaluation most of the FGDs with affected communities said that they were involved in the broad design of the response (mainly via an intermediary such as community leaders or an interview), 11 of the 44 FGDs in Kenya said that they would like to be able to give more detailed input and directly to the Women's Networks/partners or to ActionAid. "We want ActionAid or the Women's Network themselves to come to the ground and witness what we undergo as the community so that they know who to choose as beneficiaries" (male FGD group, Kopulio, West Pokot). Several groups also talked about how more ongoing community consultations were needed throughout the humanitarian programme as their needs and priorities evolved throughout this period.

In Somaliland, the results were slightly different. In Sanaag region, almost all of the 10 FGDs were satisfied with the input they were able to give but in Togdheer region, 6 of the 10 FGDs said they had not given any input at all, they had just received the assistance. Four of the 6 groups were female and 2 were male. For example, this was the case with both male and females FGD groups in the Ina af Madoobe district. In another district; "No we don't take part in design as females – no one asks us what we need - but we see the assistance when it comes" (FGD with females, Bodhley district, Togdheer region, Somaliland). It is recommended that ActionAid follows up with the Womens Networks/partners in Kenya and Somaliland to review how communities are consulted and to discuss ways to provide more opportunities for people in communities or IDP camps to communicate more directly with the partners on an ongoing basis. This also includes opportunities for men, women, different age groups and vulnerable groups. Further to this, following the initial rapid needs assessments to establish urgent priorities (as was done in Somaliland) it is recommend that ActionAid collect more detailed baseline data through studies with communities and other stakeholders, either as part of the rapid assessments or shortly afterwards. This would enable more detailed feedback to support the analysis of needs, priorities, gender relations and vulnerable groups/households, as well as further enabling evaluation of impact at the mid-term or end point of humanitarian programmes. Such studies may benefit from being carried out in coordination with other actors and stakeholders (such the technical coordination forums) that are operating in similar geographic areas, in order to be more efficient with resources and findings.

Communicating information to members of the communicated engaged in the response about the assistance, who it is for, dates and times of when it will be delivered and by which organisation (CHS 4 and OECD/DAC criteria):

To facilitate this aspect of accountability, ActionAid planned to implement transparency boards. This were planned to be for accountability at the project site, detailing allocations, rationale or basis of allocation, beneficiary selection and basis of selection, actual expenditure, category of items selected - in every area of intervention. The beneficiary list (once confirmed through selection process informed by members and representatives of the community and the duty bearers) is also made public to communities on the boards.

The evaluation team identified transparency boards at each community visited as part of the evaluation. These highlighted the purpose of the intervention, the number of households benefiting from the project and who the beneficiary groups were. This demonstrated how ActionAid had ensured the meaningful participation of communities and ensured that they had key information about the assistance.

Maintenance and management ongoing feedback mechanisms and complaints mechanisms (CHS 5 and OECD/DAC criteria):

ActionAid planned to encourage communities to raise complaints through public forums or complaint boxes and, with partners, also planned to act on the complaints raised within reasonable time and give feedback in the next community meeting.

The evaluation noted that the main mechanism of reporting any feedback and complaints about the response was to the partner organisation, who were leading on the response delivery in the different communities. The key informant interviews with the partner organisation showed that they were indeed dedicated and motivated to assist individuals with specific issues and were

available in communities either in person or by telephone: "We have a complaints desk, manned by women and men as well and they take down any suggestions and complaints. We give feedback to communities during meetings or they can get feedback from the information desks" Saeed Ali, Emergency project officer, Solidarity Community Development Organisation, Togdheer region, Somaliland). ActionAid programme staff based in each county also seemed to be well connected with the community leaders across different villages. Below is a summary of some of the feedback that was received during the response and how it was responded to:



ActionAid's partner organisation running a feedback and complaints desk at a distribution

Kenya:

- There were several examples of male and female FGD groups from in the three counties reporting a food shortage and ActionAid responded with food distributions.
- In another community Chemigut, the female members of the community said that they identified women who were in need of assistance but who were not on the food distribution lists. The Women's Network resolved this issue.
- The FGD group with women from Chebelow sub-location in Baringo said that they reported the deaths of some livestock and ActionAid responded by quickly destocking and buying goats.

Somaliland:

- There was an incident when a rape was reported by a girl the community. The network ensured that she got to hospital and helped her family (FGD with women in Sanaag region).
- The community reported to ActionAid that they needed additional food distributions and ActionAid responded to this with additional distributions (FGD with women in Sanaag region).
- The water source in our community had run out. We talked to WAAPO and said that we needed a water, WAAPO then responded to our needs" (FGD with women in Bodhley district, Togdheer region).
- There was a dispute over which women would receive the dignity kits. The women's coalition and ActionAid partner addressed the issue together and settled it with the community (FGD with women, Cadawayurura district, Togdheer).

Results

However it was also noted by the evaluation through the key informant interviews with the partner organisations and with ActionAid staff that although the networks and ActionAid were responsive and took the views of the communities seriously, there was a need to formalise the complaints/feedback reporting and recording processes. This could include the use of a 'log' that records each item of complaint/feedback with the response given, the action taken and any follow up, which could then be reviewed by ActionAid programme staff on a regular basis. It was also not clear how the confidentiality of those giving complaints/feedback was planned for and assured.

Building the capacity of communities to hold powerful actors to account (such as County Governments) and communicate their needs to such actors (CHS 4 and OECD /DAC criteria):

In terms of extent to which affected communities have been supported, as part of the response, with tools and processes to hold powerful actors (including national government, donors and INGOs) to account and communicate their needs to such actors, during the evaluation communities, partner organisations and ActionAid programme staff were asked if the response had improved the connection between communities and government actors at the county or district level.

ActionAid holds community led participatory review and reflections processes (PRRPs) and planned to include these in the phase 1 response, which aim to bring on board all the community members stakeholders and the government officials. The aim of PRRPs is that the community affected by crisis will take lead in sharing the project progress with all the stakeholders. This includes budgets and the results of the actions that have been undertaken by the partners. The platform also provides the opportunity for shared learning with other stakeholders ¹⁰⁵ .

Although the PRRP sessions have taken place in some areas and provide a platform to connect communities with decision makers in government and other stakeholders, in Kenya, only a small number of the FGD groups in communities had accessed government based decisions makers to highlight their needs and priorities. In Baringo most of the FGD groups said they had not accessed any local government authorities during 2017. One group did say that their community had accessed the county government as the representative was available and another said they had contacted the Ministry of Health representative about severe malnutrition. In West Pokot, members of the FGD groups from two sub-locations were members of the County Assembly, given them access to County Assemblies Forum. One of the purposes of the forum is to work with communities to promote closer intra-governmental and inter-governmental collaboration and consultation ¹⁰⁶ . Although this is positive, most of the FGD groups from West Pokot sub-locations said that they had no contact with the local government authorities and they had never received representatives in their communities, except for two who said they can access the County Assembly. In Somaliland, most of the FGD groups in Sanaag and Togdheer regions said they had not accessed any local government authorities. However, three FGDs with males in Sanaag did give accounts of how they engage with government structures. It may be that traditionally it is male members of the communities who have such awareness of such contact. For the communities that had contact with the government structures, it was the community committees that there were catalyst for this.



Community in Garissa county, Kenya discussing their priorities in a community meeting

¹⁰⁵ ActionAid (2017) DEC Disaster Response Programme Phase 1. April.

¹⁰⁶ Counties Assemblies Forum of Kenya <http://county_assembliesforum.org> consulted March 2017.

However, although it may not have directly engaged members of the communities on a wider scale, there have been achievements in this area. ActionAid's Capacity Building Coordinator from¹⁰⁷ Garissa County said that: *"one of my key roles, in addition to working with the partners, is to represent their views to the County Government structures. For example, the County Government was originally not supportive of the dignity kits for women, however, it was advocated to them that girls were not able to attend school without them. So now the County Government will factor them in their 2018 budgets, along with other elements of the response such as some of the food distributions"*. A key member of the main response partner organisation in Garissa county said that it was challenging for them to connect with the county government and enable women to be represented. However they did describe how they were in the process of meeting with community level stakeholders to discuss human/child rights and education, in order to develop a work plan so they can then present this to the county governor to explain the needs and priorities.

The ActionAid staff member for Garissa County in Kenya also talked about how more could have been done in this area but it was not possible, with the need to prioritise emergency food and water distributions. For example; *"In Garissa County we were originally working with two Women's Networks. However, we had to reduce their budgets which affected the activities, such as training sessions with the communities on governance and how to engage in the County processes"*¹⁰⁸. Other ActionAid staff also said that they would recommend directly engaging more government stakeholders in the development of response proposals as a strategy to increase their engagement in the response with the communities, such as Ministry of Health and Education.

In addition, the Capacity Building Coordinator¹⁰⁹ for West Pokot and Baringo Counties described various mechanisms in this area: *"we collaborated with nutrition teams at the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA), a government agency for prevention and response to drought. This enabled identification of high malnutrition rates from in both Counties following a joint survey by the NDMA and humanitarian agencies"*.

In Somaliland, 16 of the 20 FGD groups in Sanaag and Togdheer regions said they had not accessed any local government authorities, although there were some exceptions to this - three FGDs with males in Sanaag region did give accounts of how they engage with government structures. It may be that traditionally it is male members of the communities who have such awareness of such contact.

In Somaliland, for the communities that had contact with the government structures, it was the community committees that there were catalyst for this. For example, there were reports of contact with the District Committee, who then are connected with the National Drought Committee. The FGD with males in Bala-cabane district said that: *"the community committee and the regional drought response committee communicate in order to expose the current needs of Balicabane community, then they jointly contact the government to request food assistance"*. ActionAid's partner organisation in Togdheer region also said: *"Communities can talk to the District Authorities, who can take it up further to the regional level authorities"*. However, a male FGD participant from Hawd said *"the government has come to us only one time and they didn't get back ever again."*

Further to this, as was the case in Kenya, whilst it may appear to communities in Somaliland that there is limited contact between the grass-roots level and government structures, there is progress in this area by ActionAid. The ActionAid Somaliland programme staff explained that the local communities have been appealing for humanitarian and recovery interventions and following this the Somaliland government has mobilised public donations for drought recovery. The empowered communities have approached the regional and district authorities and some occasions the national officials have allocated a share of resources to their communities.

¹⁰⁷ Key informant interview with ActionAid Kenya.

¹⁰⁸ Key informant interview with ActionAid Kenya.

¹⁰⁹ Key informant interview with ActionAid Kenya.

Results

Overall, to a relatively large extent affected communities have been engaged in planning and decision making with ActionAid. Further to this, there have been clear in-roads made in supported affected with tools and processes to hold powerful actors (including national government, donors and INGOs) to account and communicate their needs to such actors. However, there is a need to further coordinate communities to connect with county level government actors, to ensure that the voices of communities are heard. ActionAid could continue to facilitate and build on this area, especially through capacity building with women-led partner organisations, village leaders and other members of the communities.

However, although most of the FGDs with the communities were satisfied with the level of input they had into the response design through leaders and elders, 10 of the FGD groups in Kenya said that they would like to give more detailed feedback about their needs and the most vulnerable households. Several FGDs in Somaliland said they had not given any feedback at all – especially in Todgheer region. It is recommended that ActionAid complements the consultations with communities and partners with the collection of baseline data (either as part of rapid needs assessments or shortly afterwards in coordination with other actors). Formalising the ongoing accountability systems will also enable people to provide feedback on an regular basis throughout the response period. These two aspects will help to ensure that critical information, needs, gender dynamics and vulnerable groups are not missed in the response design, on an ongoing basis. The extent to which ActionAid was accountability to affected populations is also addressed in the section below 'Accountability to affected populations'.

The signature also talks about supporting the access of local leaders to national funding and advocacy opportunities. Overall, to a relatively large extent affected communities have been engaged in planning and decision making with ActionAid. Especially in Kenya, there were several examples of how elected members of communities and Women's Networks were trained in tools to identify and plan priorities, with the aim that these could be presented to the County Government. Further to this, there have been clear in-roads made in supported affected with tools and processes to hold powerful actors (including national government, donors and INGOs) to account and communicate their needs to such actors. However, there is a need to further coordinate communities to connect with government actors, to ensure that the voices of communities are heard. ActionAid could continue to facilitate and build on this area utilising the participatory review and reflection processes (PRRP) model, especially through capacity building with women-led partner organisations, village leaders and other members of the communities. This has the potential to continue to make a difference to the lives of the communities as such structures have the potential to access resources and initiatives that can support the communities – this could be in terms of emergency response and initiatives for building resilient livelihoods. However, as a programme staff member in Kenya noted, there is a need for additional funding to continue build on this critical area of ActionAid's programme work with expanded training and facilitating of such community structures. Also in Somaliland, there was a trend that of the FGD groups that said they had accessed government structures, these were all male FGD groups – this is also an issue that needs to be further reviewed and addressed.

. It is also recommended to review the process of community consultations carried out by the partner organisations at the start of the response - and how they enable feedback from the main groups to inform needs and beneficiary selection. Further to this, the signature also states that it will shift the power and leadership to local organisations through building capacity, in order to enhance responses. In Kenya and Somaliland, rapid reviews were undertaken by ActionAid to consider any gaps in the capacity by the partners and to carry out any necessary training. This was especially in the areas of protection in emergencies, GBV awareness, DEC review training, the Core Humanitarian Standard, the ActionAid Humanitarian Signature, codes of conduct and transparency and accountability. All of the partners in both contexts confirmed that they had received such training and it had enabled them to deliver the response (although there was a need for training in monitoring & evaluation in emergency programmes).

Integration of ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature ¹¹⁰

In terms of how ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature has enabled a response that was accountable to affected communities, the evaluation considered the element of the signature 'effective humanitarian response means that all stakeholders and actors are accountable to affected communities. This was done in two ways, through identifying the needs and prioritise of the communities affected by the drought and also through the ingoing provision of information about the assistance to the beneficiaries.

When considering the relevance of the phase 1 response it can be concluded that through ongoing engagement with the communities before the response (due to previous programmes) and the rapid needs assessments in early 2017 (especially in Somaliland), ActionAid prioritised the views and perspectives of affected communities, especially women, and other key stakeholders in order to understand their key needs.

Resilience and sustainability

Communities and people affected by crisis are not negatively affected and are more prepared, resilient and less at-risk as a result of humanitarian action (CHS 3)

The purpose of this section, as described in the methodology section of this report, is to assess the linkages between the emergency response to resilience and the longer-term change process – or the potential for this.

The phase 1 emergency response to the drought in East Africa has had a focus on responding to urgent needs in the sector areas of food security, WASH, cash and protection. However, to inform the assessment of linkages between the emergency response to resilience and the longer-term change process – or the potential for this – the communities engaged in the phase 1 response were asked if they could list their ongoing key ingoing needs and priorities, being able to list as many as they wished (in each of the 44 FGDs with communities). This provided a starting point to learn about the current status of resilience within the communities and to develop learning and recommendations for building on this in future programming. These ongoing needs have been ranked according to the frequency that each need was mentioned and are presented in the table below.



Member of the community being supported to load her food rations onto her back before embarking on the journey home

¹¹⁰ ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature has four main components; accountability to affected communities, shifting the power, women's leadership and sustainability and resilience.

Results

Table 15: Ranking of the main ongoing needs and priorities according to the communities

Kenya (24 FGDs) ¹¹¹				
Ongoing need 1	Ongoing need 2	Ongoing need 3	Ongoing need 4	Ongoing need 5
During the training we developed a community action plan that was very explicit on the support for victims of gender based violence. We are planning to share the plan with the County Government for support and resourcing (FGD with women trained in protection services, Garissa county, Kenya).	Water distributions & storage tanks and sustainable water sources (suggested boreholes with solar panels) - the wells are dry and schools also are running out of water, with some closed. Reports of people walking for miles to get water even during the rainy seasons. Trend of men migrating to Uganda to reach water for livestock (12).	Capacity building through trainings - especially in crop production, livestock/ animal management, how to set up a business (including grants) and how to further empower women and the Women's Network. Including making visits to other communities to learn from their experiences. Communities are also highly affected by insecurity and they need peace building capacities (9).	Distributions of seeds and drought resistant seeds before the planting seasons (eg. in February) (8)	Pumps and generators to enable irrigation of farms from local rivers (4).
Somaliland (20 FGDs with communities)				
Ongoing need 1	Ongoing need 2	Ongoing need 3	Ongoing need 4	Ongoing need 5
Food assistance/ distributions, to support the mainly pastoralist communities during periods of drought, as well as scaling up to reach more household (20 FGDs)	Water assistance through trucking and storage tanks (13 FGDs).	Support for starting up other small business/ alternative livelihood (farming, farm tools, tailoring). Also financial support to buy/restock livestock, the main source of livelihood. (6)	Trainings (eg. water harvesting, farm care, livestock management, farming in drylands, literacy) (5)	Shelter and clothing for the IDPs who become displaced during the periods of drought, as well as host communities in cold periods (3). Health centres and hospitals (3). Schools (2).

¹¹¹ Three of the FGD groups also described how they needed provision of shelter items, such as mattresses, for those fleeing insecure areas. This included the community in the IDP camp in Baringo said they needed shelter as they are still living in tents (3).

It can be seen the table that the ongoing needs cited the most number of times are food and water, especially during the dry seasons and droughts, including scale up to reach more households. This also corresponds to the areas of the response that had the greatest impact, according to the communities, partners organisations and other stakeholders. Rehabilitation of water facilities (berkeds, dams and boreholes with solar) was also a finding of a Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) survey in Somaliland in September 2017 ¹¹². The third, fourth and fifth greatest needs all relate to capacity building in crop production in dry conditions, seeds in time for planting (including drought resistant seeds), livestock management, destocking and support with restocking, pumps and generators for irrigation, support with setting up a business and peace building skills (in relation to the conflicts over pasture and natural resources). The third, fourth and fifth greatest needs were also reflected in the PDM survey in Somaliland in September 2017, including training for livelihood diversification (dressmaking, henna), community collaborations for tractor hire and women's coalitions ¹¹³.

The ongoing needs in the table above, as described by the communities (and also verified by partner organisations) are not necessarily exhaustive of all potential needs and challenges within the communities affected by drought conditions. This was not a full -scale and detailed needs assessment but an opportunity to provide information that could be built upon in future assessments and to learn more about what factors might be affecting resilience futures. Other critical challenges and considerations that ActionAid includes in its programmes are not ranked by the communities in the main priorities above, such as protection risks and specific impacts on men and women. However, they do provide initial considerations for resilience programming, especially as there are potential linkages between the ongoing needs – such as the challenge of food and water shortages (and the risk of malnutrition) is connected with the wish for capacity building in farming techniques in low-rain conditions or support with alternative livelihoods to provide additional household security. The evaluation also found that for those agro-pastoral communities in Kenya and Somaliland, the success of harvests is critical for sustaining households through the dry periods.

In terms of destocking livestock, the purpose is for households who rely on this source of income to sell livestock before they become too weak to be sold for a good price (i.e. during periods of below average rain). This income can then help to sustain households to buy essential items such as food until the household can restock, even if restocking with smaller/younger animals ¹¹⁴. During the evaluation several communities described how they needed support with restocking their herds in the months following destocking – especially once pasture conditions have improved. However, a key trend in the region is that traditional means of restocking have been eroded due to recurrent drought, raiding, conflict, environmental degradation and an increase in population.

To address these issues, households that mainly depend on pastoralism, as well as agro-pastoral and agricultural households, need to build their resilience to enable them to draw on accumulated resources (or resources provided by others) to meet their needs during a critical period, until their livelihood strategies can be re-established. ActionAid Kenya also noted in the phase 1 response final report that any future funding should consider addressing underlying structural causes of vulnerability and consider policy engagement for transformational change (eg. sustainable pasture management, land rights and use – engaging with the relevant decision makers and policy makers).

¹¹² ActionAid (2017) Post Distribution Monitoring report. September.

¹¹³ Ibid

¹¹⁴ Key informant interview with ActionAid Kenya.

Results

Taking all of this into account, from a programming perspective (including multi-sector and multi-agency approaches) figure 3 contains recommendations for building resilience, according to the seasonal calendar of dry/rainy seasons, agricultural calendar and livestock migration calendar.

Further to this, the evaluation found that several of the communities in Kenya and Somaliland are already coming up with strategies to prepare for and overcome for the dry seasons. Whilst these strategies contained different activities, they all had one factor in common; members of communities collaborating together to overcome challenges and prepare and manage in the dry seasons. It is recommended that future any programmes with a focus on resilience review the current initiatives and plans underway, with a view to building on them, and also focus on this thematic area of collaboration. Several communities expressed that they would wish to visit other communities that have embarked on such initiatives, in order to learn from their experiences.

Some examples of existing strategies to prepare and manage in the dry seasons that were identified during the evaluation (by both men and women), either established or in an initial phase, include;

Kenya:

- In February 2018, fencing was already underway in the Mukutani area, Chemoigut sub-location of Baringo county in Kenya to protect grasslands needed as pastures for their livestock during the dry seasons, reducing the need for migration with the animals. The fencing was utilising trees branches and brush that was already destroyed by the animals.
- In Baringo county, Mukutani Irrigation Scheme, where land is jointly tilled by each community member until we farm the whole allocated scheme area. This is to ensure food sustainability – and communities then sell crops to for cash to support household needs. In terms of its structure, in January – the community carries out fencing; in February/March – tilling; in March/April – planting; in August – harvesting”. The scheme is attracting more individuals wishing to be part of the initiative.
- In West Pokot county, some of the FGDs with women reported that they are collaborating for fundraising purposes - especially during August to support households with items such as school fees or buying land, as well as working together to plan how to access pasture to avoid migration.

Somaliland:

- The community at Karashar, Sanaag region has already started to dig for water but they need tools and digging facilities.
- In Sanaag, one of the community committees met in October 2017 to discuss digging a well and diversifying to start farming as a community, as well as continuing livestock management. Women were also included in the meeting for the first time.

“We must take all possible ways to get shield from the droughts and let it not affect us like before” FGD with females, Bali-Cabane district, Sanaag region, Somaliland).

Integration of ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature

The Humanitarian Signature states that it is crucial to link emergency response to resilience building and longer-term, sustainable change. Including empowering individuals and addressing inequalities through all of our development programming.

As the phase 1 of the humanitarian response mainly focused on emergency relief, this pillar may not be fully relevant until later programming phases. However, the evaluation has found that, according to the communities some achievements have been made in this area through building the capacity of local partner organisations and of the communities to hold key stakeholders to account. There is still the opportunity to build on this area as the majority of the FGDs with communities said that they had not been able to access local government decision makers – this is a critical factor in resilience as communities could be prioritised in county development plans that could support them with various initiatives. However, there were some examples of success of community led initiatives in Kenya and Somaliland of activities that could enable people to better sustain through the dry periods and droughts – a key enabling factor for these seemed to be the communities working together, as well as using tools to identify and document needs and priorities that could then be presented to such government structures.

Annual timeline for building resilience in drought years in Kenya (Baringo, West Pokot and Garissa counties) and Somaliland (Sanaag and Togdheer regions)

Month	Kenya: traditional dry/ rainy seasons	Kenya: Potential rain performance in expected drought years	Kenya: Maximum traditional planting seasons for mainly agro pastoral counties Baringo & West (may vary by one month)	Kenya: Traditional harvesting seasons for mainly agropastoral counties Baringo & West Pokot (may vary by one month)	Somaliland: Traditional dry/ rainy seasons	Somaliland: Potential rain performance in expected drought years	Traditional livestock migration for Kenya and Somaliland	Evaluation recommendations for emergency assistance and building resilience
January	Dry	Dry			Dry	Dry	Migration with livestock to dry season grazing areas/available water points	Time dependent recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular needs assessments of priority indicators with communities, displaced populations and IDP camps. Food, water and needed NFI assistance through partners to affected communities and schools to cover spikes in needs. Continue to review the role of unconditional cash transfers. Distribution of traditional (review drought resistant seeds) in September and February in time for planting. Assistance with irrigation of crops, depending on the early warning system reports and expected rain. Assistance with the destocking of livestock, as needed by communities, after the rainy seasons in January/February and May/June before prices become too low and livestock become too weak*. Review and consider capacity building in alternatives to fodder production (eg. hydroponics) Monthly monitoring the IPC/food security classifications and projections (FEWSNET, Govt of Kenya)*. Ongoing recommendations for assistance to support resilience (including a multi-sector, multi-agency approach): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and capacity building in farming in arid and semi-arid environments, sustainable water harvesting, sustainable fodder production and fencing, including the development of 'Farmer Field Schools' (train the trainer) to enable sustainable training systems. Training and capacity building in livestock health, vaccinations and treatment of disease. Include connection with the relevant government agencies and assistance with needed resources and/or advocacy for resources. Support with livelihood diversification (including natural resource management), to support household resilience during lean months and restocking herds after destocking. Capacity building with communities in peace building related to land related conflict, including linking the local government structures - and advocating on land management and land rights*. Capacity building and training in protection services and awareness of GBV issues with men, women, young people and community/ governmental leaders, as well as in leadership women's and child rights*. Continued engagement between the communities and county level government structures (eg. including the NDMA in Kenya) to advocate and prioritise needs*. Review and build on community-led initiatives that relate to any the above, especially initiatives that rely on community collaboration and have the potential for sustainable use of resources.
February	Dry	Dry		Short rains harvest	Dry	Dry		
March	Rains	Almost complete failure of rain or below average	Long rains planting: sorghum, beans, maize planting		Dry	Dry		
April	Rains	Rains			Gu rains	Rains	Migration with livestock becomes more spread out as more pasture.	
May	Rains	Rains			Gu rains	Rain below average		
June	Dry	Dry			Gu rains	Rain ceased early		
July	Dry	Dry		Long rains harvest	Dry	Dry	Migration with livestock to dry season grazing areas/available water points	
August	Dry	Dry			Dry	Dry		
September	Dry	Dry			Dry	Dry		
October	Rains	Almost complete failure of rain or below average			Dehr rains	Almost complete failure of rain or below average	Migration with livestock becomes more spread out as more pasture.	
November	Rains		Short rains planting: sorghum, beans, maize, millet, barley planting		Dehr rains			
December	Rains				Dry Season		Migration with livestock to dry season grazing areas/available water points	

* Experience/components of ActionAid's DEC response to the 2017 drought in East Africa with Women's Network/Disaster Management Committee partners (www.actionaid.org; www.dec.org.uk)

** Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) Kenya Food Security Outlook October 2017 to May 2018 https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/KENYA%20Food%20Security%20Outlook_October%202017_Final_0.pdf.

***Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) Version 2.0. Describes the severity of food emergencies; based on common standards and language, this five-phase scale is intended to help governments and other humanitarian actors quickly understand a crisis (or potential crisis) and take action. It is assessed by the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) <http://www.fews.net/IPC>. IPC 3 is defined as even with any humanitarian assistance at least one in five HHs in the area have the following or worse; household have food consumption gaps with high or above usual acute malnutrition and households are marginally able to meet minimum food needs only with accelerated depletion of livelihood assets that will lead to food consumption gaps.

Source: Evaluation of ActionAid's DEC response to the 2017 drought in East Africa. Lizzie Fletcher-Wood (Research & Evaluation Services) and Roy Mutandwa, independent humanitarian evaluation consultants

Results

Gender analysis

This purpose of this section is to evaluate to what extent gender considerations and gender sensitive programming was included in the phase 1 response. The evaluation aims to assess to what extent did the response promote women's leadership and were women and girls in communities equipped to be agents of change able to address their own needs.

The initial assessments of the situation by ActionAid, either through consultations with partners and communities or needs assessments, found that several groups were most at risk to the effects of the drought including children under 14 years old, children under 5 years old, the elderly, IDPs, orphans and pregnant and lactating women. Women as a general category appeared to be more vulnerable than men, such as being more likely to reduce their food intake per day than men. Also, a key area identified was the increasing protection risks that were exacerbated by the drought conditions. These included an increased risk of gender based violence (GBV), with factors for this including increasing distances to water points or searching for pasture for livestock. An increased risk of child marriage was also identified for girls not attending school, mainly due to the drought conditions (such as children under pressure to search for water/other resources or households not being able to afford school fees)¹¹⁵.

The evaluation team identified several gender sensitive elements during the process of the evaluation, which were based on this analysis. These are listed below;

- ActionAid ensured that women were included in the design and implementation of the response. Partner organisations (mainly Women's Networks) had a leading role in planning priorities with community leaders and ActionAid, as well as implementing the assistance.
- The response prioritised women and children in the assistance. For example, in Somaliland 62% of the total beneficiaries were female¹¹⁶. Further disaggregation showed that children under 14, pregnant and lactating women and the elderly were the main groups included in the response. These groups were prioritised as they were considered to be the most at-risk to effects of the drought, as well as this reflecting the community demographics to a degree¹¹⁷.
- The school feeding element in Kenya supported 19954 children to stay in school due to a trend that girls were increasingly not attending school, primarily due to the drought.
- ActionAid supported the partners to implement safe spaces for women, which acted as safe distribution points and as spaces for women to raise concerns/issues on violence against women and girls. In addition to the distributions, the partners used the spaces to offer referral advice and psycho-social support to survivors of GBV and other forms of abuse. The process of choosing the locations of the safe spaces was led by the partner organisations and informed by the preferences of women in the communities. There were no reports from women or men of challenges or problems accessing the assistance through the safe spaces¹¹⁸. A Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) survey in Somaliland in September 2017 also found that there were no problems accessing food – with the exception of elderly people who were at risk of struggling to access the assistance¹¹⁹.

¹¹⁵Muse A N (2017) Needs assessment - food security. Preliminary findings report for ActionAid Somaliland (November). ActionAid DEC phase 1 plans, Kilis with ActionAid programme staff.

¹¹⁶ActionAid programme data.

¹¹⁷Data collected from ActionAid and partner organisations.

¹¹⁸ActionAid phase 1 response final reports, Kilis with partner organisations/women's networks, FGDs with women trained in protection services.

¹¹⁹ActionAid (2017) Post Distribution Monitoring report, Somaliland. September.

- Distributing the food assistance for the household directly to women, which aimed to give them a measure of control in decision making at the household ¹²⁰ .
- Women were also empowered through training that related to the provision of protection services (in response to risks such as GBV and FGM) and also building the capacity of women to be decision makers ¹²¹ .
- In Kenya and Somaliland, people with disabilities and pregnant and lactating women were included in the Disaster Management Committees leading the response (comprising of women's networks and other female members of the communities) ¹²² .
- Distribution of NFI kits (dignity kits including sanitary towels after feedback from communities), which promoted women's dignity ¹²³ .
- There were multiple accounts from women in the communities and the partner organisations about how men were shifting their thinking about women, especially in terms of women being decision makers in regards to the response and in the household. For example, of the eight FGDs in Baringo county, Kenya (five with women and three with men), all said that before the response began men normally made decisions for the household (with a potential exception being if the women had attended school to a high level). When asked who made decisions after the response had ended, five of the eight groups said that decisions were more likely to be made jointly, due to the training women and men had received from the Women's Networks. Some of the groups also said that the training helped them to resolve disputes and conflict in the home, as well as enter in local business enterprise with other women such as poultry management. The same trends were seen in West Pokot county and to a lesser degree in Garissa county. In Somaliland some changes in this area were seen but over half of the 20 FGDs with communities in this context said that men and women both make decisions in the household – this may be influenced by men often having migrated with livestock.
- Building the capacity of Women's Networks and communities to develop plans for ongoing needs and priorities and using these to hold decision makers to account (eg. local government agencies who have the power to make decisions about levels and types of assistance to the communities).

The evaluation found that, given this was an emergency response in the first six-month phase, the level of gender analysis and considerations were largely appropriate. In an emergency response it is crucial to identify the roles and coping mechanisms are being used and the impacts on different groups. This may reveal that coping mechanisms are posing more of a negative impact on women (and other groups), as well as any protection considerations such as accessing humanitarian assistance at distribution points. The evaluation also found that ActionAid did assess and consider such gender sensitive factors in the planning stages of the response, mainly the specific humanitarian needs of women and how women could safely access the assistance, as well as women leading the response delivery itself.

Gathering information on further differences within the household that related to recovery aspects was not a priority during initial rapid assessment of a situation of acute food and water insecurity, as interventions are usually targeted at communities and the groups within them as a whole ¹²⁴ . The phase 1 response was not focusing on such recovery aspects such as longer-term food security outcomes or building resilient livelihoods, which would have required this additional in-depth analysis of gender roles and relations. However, at the same time, gender sensitive needs assessments or baseline studies at the onset of humanitarian responses may identify further challenges specific to men and women, which could be included in programme design. For example, ActionAid's Real Time Evaluation in Somaliland at the mid-point of the response found that people, especially women, had lost their form of transport to carry water (eg donkeys) and were carrying water on their backs. ActionAid recommended that distributions of wheelbarrows would have had an impact in this case and have recommended this for future responses.

¹²⁰ ActionAid phase 1 response final reports and main trends of KIs with partner organisations/women's networks, FGDs with women in communities.

¹²¹ Main trends of KIs with partner organisations/women's networks and FGDs with women in communities/women trained in protection services in Kenya and Somaliland.

¹²² ActionAid phase 1 response final reports and KIs with partners/women's networks.

¹²³ Ibid

¹²⁴ Young H, Jaspers S, Brown R, Frize J, Khogali H (2001) Food security assessments in emergencies: a livelihoods approach. A paper for the Humanitarian Practice Network.

<www.agriskmanagementforum.org/sites/agriskmanagementforum.org/files/Documents/Oxfam%20Food%20Security%20Assessment%20in%20Emergencies.pdf>.

Results

In terms of the analysis of response from the 44 FGDs with communities in Kenya and Somaliland to questions related to the impacts of the response and any ongoing needs, the evaluation found that there were no differences in the responses between men and women. For example, all but one of the FGDs said that food assistance through distributions to communities, IDP camps and schools had resulted in the main impacts of the response on their lives (including increasing school attendance), followed by the distribution of water. There were multiple accounts from men and women about how the food assistance had a life-saving impact, especially for children, pregnant/lactating women and the elderly.

Integration of ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature

ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature states that women are often the worst affected in emergencies, as well as the first responders. It aims to ensure that power is shifted to women leaders in order to address existing power imbalances at all levels by promoting the leadership of women who are affected by crisis.

The gender analysis highlights that the Humanitarian Signature was integrated and facilitated the response in several main ways, from ensuring women were at the forefront of response design and leadership through developing the capacity of Women's Networks, to delivering assistance safely for women and providing training about women's rights and decision-making roles. The evaluation found that the response had been successful in these aims, according to the feedback from the communities and other stakeholders.

Although ActionAid did prioritise the humanitarian needs of women in an emergency context, it is recommended that future humanitarian programmes could conduct baseline studies disaggregated by sex and age, as well as by vulnerable groups. Baseline studies could also assess the roles of men and women in more detail in terms of longer term recovery, such as disaster preparedness, food security and livelihoods, aspect of which could be incorporated into the response as feasible. Such data would also further enable analysis of impact of the response outcomes.

Resource management

Communities and people affected by crisis can expect that the organisations assisting them are managing resources effectively, efficiently and ethically (CHS 9)

The evaluation had a reduced focus on this quality standard as compared to other areas, due to the time available, which meant that other quality areas took priority. However, the evaluation team carried out a review of the budget for the phase 1 response and calculated the percentage of overall funding spending on different aspects of the project and the necessary resources, as outlined in the table below. It can be seen that 81.29% of the total DEC appeal amount was spent on supplies for humanitarian assistance, 3.07% on logistics, 7.80% on personnel and 2.38% on personnel support.

In terms of specific examples of how funding was allocated, the 81.29% spent on humanitarian assistance was mainly spend on food aid, with food assistance accounting for over half of the total appeal amount. In terms of the specific areas of spending related to food these included food parcels, meals for school children, food vouchers, cash for livestock destocking and cash for work initiatives. The 7.12% spent on in-country locally engaged staff provided a 10% to 30% contribution to the salaries of staff directly implementing and managing the response including Response Officers, Team Leaders, Head of Programmes, Protection Coordinator, M&E Officer, Drivers and the Head of Finance.

The evaluation team concluded that in terms of budget allocations, ActionAid has managed resources for the response in line with the actual needs and priorities of the communities affected by the drought.

Table 16: Percentage of spending on different aspects of the phase 1 response

Overall DEC appeal budget total: **£657,874**

Spending area	% of budget spent (revised budget)
Response supplies (81.29% of total)	
WASH	13.88
Nutrition	4.05
Protection	2.52 (mainly training and capacity building)
NFI	5.47
Food	55.37
Multi-sector	0.87
Accountability to affected populations	4.60
Logistics (3.07% of total)	
Transport	3.04
Office	0.03
Personnel (7.80% of total)	
In-country locally engaged staff	7.12
In-country expatriate staff	0.67
Personnel support (2.38% of total)	
In-country locally engaged staff: subsistence/travel	2.28
Communications	0.10
Total:	100

Overall evaluation recommendations

The recommendations below are based on the evidence gathered during the course of this evaluation. Following each recommendation, it is stated in brackets who the recommendation is aimed at within ActionAid.

Impact:

- Although ActionAid did prioritise the humanitarian needs of women in an emergency context and assess the needs through a range of stakeholders (enhanced by ActionAid's long-standing experience working with the affected communities), it is recommended that future humanitarian programmes could conduct baseline studies, normally conducted shortly after a rapid assessment (which usually provides more an overview of the situation). A baseline study is an analysis describing the initial conditions (appropriate indicators) before the start of a project/programme, against which progress can be assessed or comparisons made. Baseline studies could also be an opportunity to assess the roles of men and women in more detail in terms of longer term recovery, such as disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction, food security & livelihoods and linking humanitarian to resilience programming - aspects of which could be incorporated into the response as feasible. Such data would also further enable analysis of impact of the response outcomes. If a standardised sampling methodology is used (usually a quantitative focus complemented by qualitative methods - but could be qualitative only if thorough enough), this would further enable the comparability of results over time ¹²⁵. (DEC, ActionAid country programmes with oversight by regional/global programme and M&E staff).
- Following the point above, it is recommended that ActionAid develops priority indicators and outcomes for responses, from which the planned outputs and activities could flow. For example, malnutrition levels, food security scores, community coping mechanisms, vegetation condition indices, migration, displacement, number of IDPs, resource based conflicts, protection indicators, education indicators, preparedness, resilience and disaster risk reduction ¹²⁶. Systematic monitoring and evaluating of such critical indicators could also form the basis for appeals as they can act as an early warning system, in conjunction with external sources of information such as the IPC food security classifications. (DEC, ActionAid country programmes with oversight by regional/global programme and M&E staff).
- Several partners requested training in monitoring & evaluation in emergencies – recommended to prioritise this in capacity building with partner organisations in order to support the quality of assistance and the evaluation of impact. (ActionAid country programmes).

Protection:

- Following feedback from communities and ActionAid programme staff, it is recommended that there is a need to expand the protection component and train more women in the provision of protection services, such as raising awareness about the issues, risks and referral pathways. It was also identified by two FGDs and ActionAid staff that there is a need to include the police and health staff in such training. (ActionAid country programmes with oversight by regional/global programme staff and protection advisors)
- As requested by women's networks in Kenya, it is recommended to review the possibility of increasing resources for women's shelters and transport for victims of GBV. (ActionAid country programmes with oversight by regional/global programme staff and protection advisors).

¹²⁵UNICEF (2013) Humanitarian Action and Post Crisis Recovery <www.unicef.org/publicpartnerships/files/Humanitarian_Action_and_Post-crisis_Recovery_2013_Thematic_Report.pdf>

¹²⁶ActionAid Kenya (2017) DEC phase 1 final report. October.

Accountability to affected populations:

- It is recommended to formalise the complaints/feedback reporting and recording processes with the communities, led by the partner organisations. Although the partners were in general very active in this area, this could include the use of a 'log' that records each item of complaint/feedback with the response given and any follow up, which could then be reviewed by ActionAid programme staff. Also verify with the partners how confidentiality is ensured. (For ActionAid country programmes).
- It is recommended to review the programme needs and what resources are needed to continue to build on the critical area of communities holding powerful actors to account, for example, local government bodies, such as community committees. (DEC, ActionAid country programmes, supported by regional or global advocacy and policy advisors).
- The evaluation found that some FGDs with communities in Kenya wished to give more input into the response design and beneficiary selection. In Somaliland, several FGD groups in Togdheer region said they had not had the opportunity to give any input. It is recommended to review the process of community consultations carried out by the partner organisations at the start of the response - and how they enable feedback from the main groups to inform needs and beneficiary selection. The evaluation found that this may need to be built upon to ensure the input of communities – or at least a representative sample directly from communities and other stakeholders. (ActionAid country programmes).

Resilience and sustainability:

- In addition to monitoring humanitarian and resilience based indicators as described above, it is recommended to carry out an in-depth assessment with communities to find out their ideas and current initiatives for building resilience futures and what available and sustainable resources they can access, including an analysis of gender relations. This could be complementing by analysing what additional assistance is needed to support and implement such ideas and plans for community initiatives, as well as livelihood diversification to complement traditional livelihoods. Communities could visit successful initiatives to learn from the experiences of others. The evaluation team also suggests connecting with NGOs in Kenya that train women to produce and sell washable sanitary towels. (DEC, ActionAid country programmes with oversight by regional/global programme and M&E staff).
- Communities in the west of Kenya mentioned the importance of seeds and how a distribution of drought resistant seeds in January would have meant they could have planted in time for the long rains in March, as well as support with generators for irrigation. Specific seeds they mentioned were; hybrid 513,516, DH04 maize and mangos. Other studies in Kenya in similar areas have found that replacing maize with drought-tolerant crops such as sorghum, millets, pigeonpea, cowpea and green gram is helping farmers overcome the failure of rains and its damaging impact on maize. It is recommended to carry out further research into this key area for potentially increasing resilience to drought. (DEC, ActionAid country programmes with oversight by regional/global programme and M&E staff).
- It is recommended to review how to build the capacity of households and communities to restock animals after destocking (considering the minimum number needed to sustain the household), such as through cash generated through livelihood diversification or community networks such as savings groups, with the aim of enabling pastoralists to have the resources to assist with restocking. It is also recommended to carry out further research the implications of restocking with different types of animals that are less expensive than cows, such as goats. Such initiatives should be considered in the framework of sustainable pasture management¹²⁷. (DEC, ActionAid country programmes with oversight by regional/global programme and M&E staff).

¹²⁷ World Bank Group (2016) Confronting Drought in Africa's Drylands. Africa Development Forum. Cervigni R, Morris M, Editors.

Overall evaluation recommendations

- Some of the communities in Kenya expressed interest in peace building training, especially for community leaders and elders. It is recommended to review the interlinked factors for such conflict (such as in relation to pasture and land use) and what to prioritise in helping communities to address such issues – and with the support of local government actors, as well as other key stakeholders and donors. (ActionAid country programmes with oversight by regional/global programme and protection/advocacy advisors).
- It is recommended to continue work with pastoral and agro-pastoral communities in the area of fodder production and appropriate storage to help to sustain livestock through dry periods, as part of wider farm and natural resource planning. There are successful examples of fodder production in Kenya ¹²⁸ and Somaliland ¹²⁹, as well as hydroponics ¹³⁰. (ActionAid country programmes with oversight by regional/global programme and M&E staff).
- Strengthening animal health services to prevent disease and death rates – and accelerate growth rates. This could be through advocacy and linkages with government agencies. Alternatively, building the capacity of members of the communities to treat livestock ¹³¹. (ActionAid country programmes with oversight by regional/global programme and M&E staff).
- As will be known to ActionAid as a partner of WFP, WFP works with the Government of Kenya in some counties to provide cash for school meals in areas where markets are available, instead of in-kind assistance of food distributions. This approach aims to support local agricultural production and small-holder farmers ¹³². ActionAid could build on this and apply assistance for school meals mirroring WFP's model in locations that have the right market conditions. This would be especially applicable during any future resilience programming. (ActionAid country programmes with oversight by regional/global programme and M&E staff).
- Enable populations to connect with early warning systems so they can further anticipate shocks such as failure of rain or changes in market prices. (ActionAid country programmes with oversight by regional/global programme and M&E staff).

Sustainability:

- Continue to capitalise on the elements of the programme that are sustainable and do not require a high level of physical inputs but have demonstrated impact. For example, training women in protection services, who then go on to train other women. Also consider the establishment of Farmer Field Schools using a similar model to build the capacity of farmers to harvest water and other techniques suitable for increasingly dry conditions. In addition, for the communities that had contact with the government structures, it was the community committees that were the catalyst for this – consider reinforcing their capacity and building on the participatory review and reflection process (PRRP) model. (ActionAid country programmes with oversight by regional/global programme and M&E staff). Many FGD groups asked for training and inputs into small business start-ups such as tailoring or growing vegetables to sell, to give them an additional source of livelihood. Some NGOs in Kenya are also teaching women to make and sell sustainable sanitary towels, which also avoids disposable towels - please contact the evaluation team for contacts.

¹²⁸Infonet Biovision 'Fodder Production' <www.infonet-biovision.org/AnimalHealth/fodder-production#simple-table-of-contents-1> consulted March 2018.

¹²⁹Spatte Irrigation Network Foundation 'Fodder Production with Spate Irrigation and Road Run-Off' <http://spate-irrigation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/PN_28_Fodder-production_SF.pdf> consulted March 2018.

¹³⁰Standard Digital Kenya (February 2018) 'Less water, no soil, more fodder: Kenya farmers beat drought' <www.standardmedia.co.ke/business/article/2001270065/less-water-more-fodder-how-dairy-farmers-beat-drought>.

¹³¹World Bank Group (2016) Confronting Drought in Africa's Drylands. Africa Development Forum. Cervigni R, Morris M, Editors.

¹³²World Food Programme (2017) School Meals Remain Indispensable in Kenya <<http://m.wfp.org/stories/school-meals-remain-indispensable-kenya>>.

Conclusion

As a result of the severe drought in East Africa in 2016 and 2017, ActionAid launched a humanitarian response in Kenya, Somaliland and Ethiopia in late 2016/early 2017. The response initially utilised relatively small-scale funds from DPRF (Disaster Preparedness Response Funds), as well as country level unrestricted funds. However, the response was significantly scaled up in Kenya and Somaliland with an appeals budget of £657,874 from the DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee) ¹³³. The initial 6-month DEC phase 1 response ran from mid-March to the end of September 2017. The response reached 94,301 unique beneficiaries in Kenya and 35,940 in Somaliland, with the main beneficiary groups being children under the age of 17 and pregnant and lactating women.

The humanitarian assistance focused on several core outcome areas in response to the challenges identified in initial needs assessments and other research, including food access, water access and storage solutions, improved accountability to drought affected people, access to basic needs assistance (Somaliland), life-saving support for malnourishment (Kenya), as well as improved safety, dignity and reduced risk of GBV for women and girls.

The evaluation took a qualitative approach to the methodology and engaged affected communities and other stakeholders through focus groups discussions and key informant interviews. This was complemented by quantitative approaches such as participatory seasonal timelines and ranking of impact. This additional approaches further enabled the identification of trends and analysis of impact. Generally, men and women participated separately in the evaluation. A detailed desk review has accompanied this evaluation and supported the development of recommendations. The evaluation was based in the framework of the Core Humanitarian Standard complemented by the OECD/DAC quality evaluation standards. Based on these quality areas, the standards have been grouped into several main areas, which has provided the framework for the reporting of findings in the report. These quality areas are; relevance and timeliness, impact and effectiveness, accountability, resilience and sustainability, a gender analysis and resource management.

In terms of the timeliness of the response, the majority of the 44 focus group discussions, especially in Kenya, said that they believed the assistance arrived at the right time – although most of these same groups said that they were in a desperate situation in the months before this. Further to this, it was definitively reported by around a third of the FGDs with the communities that impact would have increased if some areas of assistance could have taken place earlier from January 2017, such as the food assistance and destocking of livestock before they became too weak. This may have been possible to assess as the short rains at the end of 2016 were predicted to be below average or fail across the region ¹³⁴. However, the evaluation found that in Kenya ActionAid's DEC phase 1 response corresponded with information from external early warning systems, such as the food insecurity IPC classifications from FEWSNET. The response was also launched shortly after a declaration of a humanitarian crisis by the Government of Kenya. In Somaliland, the IPC classifications had been at stressed or crisis levels throughout 2016, as well as the Government of Somaliland declaring an emergency earlier in 2016. This could be reviewed in more detail to see if a response could have been launched earlier in Somaliland. At the same time, the timing of when to launch a response can depend on multiple factors that may be out of the control of implementing agencies.



A women-led partner organisation in Garissa county, Kenya leading the distribution of food in a safe space

¹³³ DEC – Disasters Emergency Committee <www.dec.org.uk>.

¹³⁴ FEWSNET WFP NDMA 'Kenya Food Security Outlook June 2016 – January 2017'

<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/KE%20FSO%20June_Final.pdf>

Conclusion

When looking at response effectiveness and impact, the evaluation found that all but one of the many planned outputs within the outcome areas were met or exceeded. In addition, the two greatest areas of impact of the response was the food and water assistance. The main trend, according to the communities included in the evaluation and other stakeholders, was that food distributions had meant alleviation of hunger and food insecurity, with potentially vulnerable groups such as children and pregnant and lactating women particularly impacted. Better living standards was also a key theme, mainly in terms of having more energy for activities such as farming. The 44 seasonal timelines developed in focus group discussions with the communities (and IDPs) showed a trend that several negative coping mechanisms were in use before the phase 1 response began, as reported by men and women. These included children not attending school, walking further to collect water and eating the meat of dead livestock. The evaluation found that these negative coping mechanisms were significantly reduced during the time the humanitarian assistance was received in the phase 1 response. The evaluation also concluded that the distribution of food to schools had increased attendance rates by 19% in a sample of nine schools in Kenya, with this finding triangulated with communities, partners and head teachers.

The frequency of the food distributions to the communities was also relevant in that it provided a regular ration and allowed communities to manage resources. There were no problems reported with access to the assistance by men or women and ActionAid and the partner organisations/Women's Networks ensured that the distributions were conducted at designated safe spaces, also led by the partner organisations. Although several communities noted that there were still many households in need of assistance in their communities and expressed in the FGDs that the assistance could be expanded to cover more households – this was particularly the case in Somaliland.

There were some distributions of cash in some areas but the main mode of food distribution was a carefully measured portion of food containing a number of calories that was based on international standards (although ActionAid intends to implement more cash assistance going forward).

The evaluation also found that ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature had underpinned the response, guiding the overall approach. For example, the signature states that women are often the worst affected in emergencies, as well as the first responders. The signature also aims to ensure that power is shifted to women leaders in order to address existing power imbalances at all levels by promoting the leadership of women who are affected by crisis. In this humanitarian programme, these principles facilitated the response in several main ways, from ensuring women were at the forefront of response design and leadership through developing the capacity of Women's Networks, to delivering assistance safely for women through safe spaces and providing training about women's rights and decision-making roles. The evaluation found that the response had been successful in these aims, according to the feedback from the communities and other stakeholders.

Further to this, due to ActionAid's longstanding work with communities throughout East Africa, ActionAid had extensive knowledge about the protection risks and concerns faced within communities. ActionAid was aware that during emergencies protection issues become increasingly serious, including GBV, child labour, domestic violence and early child marriage. The phase 1 response aimed to develop community based protection mechanisms through the training of women based in Women's Networks and from the general community. 90 women were trained in Kenya and 510 in Somaliland. The main trend was the women were happy with the training due to the accessibility of the language, good quality trainers and transport and accommodation was included which enabled more women to attend. There were some examples of men in the communities discouraging the training – women who said this explained that this was because in these instances men felt the activities took away from the traditional roles of women.

Aside from these challenges, one of the main effects of the training was that the women shared their knowledge with other women, who then went on to raise awareness in the communities in women's rights and risks such as GBV and FGM. 1703 individuals (mainly women, including a small number of men) were reached in Kenya and 2902 were reached in Somaliland. When communities were asked about the impacts of the protection services, several main trends were reported by women trained in protection services and other members of the communities. These related to men starting to shift their thinking about women's leadership and being more accepting of women making decisions at the household and community level. Some of the women in FGDs said that if women had attended high school, this often meant that men were more accepting of them making decisions. Also, two of the FGD groups in Kenya talked about how they are seeing changes in attitudes towards FGM, whereas previously men tended to want FGM to have taken place before they would marry, this attitude was starting to change. However, the relatively low level of referrals following reports of GBV in Somaliland during the response period indicates that there are still cultural norms preventing women from reporting incidences such as GBV and being referred.

Several suggestions were made by women in communities about how to enhance the protection services, including overall expansion of the training, inclusion of groups such as the police and health centres and also the need for women's shelters with transport.

Another key approach of the response was building the capacity of women in communities to design and lead the response, as well as shifting the power to women in terms of decision making and holding decision makers to account – such as county governments and other agencies. One of the main reasons for the focus on working with partner organisations in this way is because they are embedded in the communities affected by the emergency. In both Kenya and Somaliland ActionAid's partner organisations/women's networks described how they have seen that more women have been empowered and have been engaged in decision making and implementing activities such as distributions. There were strong indications that the Women's Networks had the ability to implement the activities and were well-received by the communities themselves in their role. ActionAid's ongoing efforts to review and build the capacity of the partners was a key contributing factor to this. ActionAid also worked to connect the partner organisations to local government structures where they could communicate the priorities and needs of the communities affected by the drought ¹³⁵.

ActionAid and the partners also ensured that transparency boards were placed in each locality to communicate key information about the response and the assistance. In terms of feedback and complaints mechanisms, the evaluation noted that the main mechanism of reporting any feedback and complaints about the response was to the partner organisation, who were leading on the response delivery in the different communities. The key informant interviews with the partner organisation showed that they were indeed dedicated and motivated to assist individuals with specific issues and were available in communities either in person or by telephone. However it was also noted by the evaluation that there was a need to formalise the complaints/feedback reporting and recording processes. This could include the use of a 'log' that records each item of complaint/feedback with the response given, the action taken and any follow up, which could then be reviewed by ActionAid programme staff on a regular basis. It was also not clear how the confidentiality of those giving complaints/feedback was planned for and assured.

¹³⁵ Key informant interview with ActionAid Kenya.

Conclusion

In terms of relevance, ActionAid Kenya and ActionAid Somaliland have demonstrated that decisions about what to prioritise in terms of the response activities were based on evidence from a range of sources. This prioritised the communities affected by the crisis, as well as government departments, relevant forums and UN agencies. ActionAid triangulated the information between the different sources to increase its reliability and then then designed a response that was relevant to the affected communities, informed by the evidence. ActionAid was also flexible to respond to spikes of needs during the response (enabled by feedback about the situation by partner organisations and other actors), such as malnutrition and cholera outbreaks. ActionAid was able to respond to these in conjunction with other actors, such as UNICEF.

Further to this, a key and valued approach of ActionAid is to include input from communities into the main needs and selection of vulnerable households, in conjunction with the partner organisations, committees and local leaders. Although most focus group discussions revealed that communities were satisfied with the input they had given, several FGDs with affected communities in Kenya said they would like to give more detailed input into the response design and the identification of the most vulnerable households – and directly to ActionAid if possible. In Togdheer region, Somaliland, several FGD groups said they had not given input into the design of the response with the partner organisation. Although this was a mix of male and female groups in Somaliland, one reason provided for this by the communities was that females were not provided with the same opportunities to give their contributions.

Although this approach, combined with the rapid needs assessments that were carried out, provided valuable information about how to implement the assistance and reach the most vulnerable, baseline studies carried out shortly after rapid needs assessments that include surveys with communities and other stakeholders have greater potential to capture more detailed and disaggregated input. Data such as this also has the potential to be coordinated and collected on a multi-agency basis in improve resource efficiency and scope, including the different partner organisations, local government agencies, sector working groups and other forums. The results could then be used to further inform the beneficiary selection in conjunction with community leaders and community committees as their inclusion and leadership is critical, as already demonstrated by ActionAid.

Following this, it is recommended to develop critical and priority indicators collected with data disaggregated by gender, age and other groups, including vulnerable groups, also noted by ActionAid Kenya as a recommendation to the evaluation team. For example, malnutrition levels, food security scores, community coping mechanisms, vegetation condition indices, migration, displacement, number of IDPs, knowledge and attitudes towards protection risks, resource based conflicts, protection indicators and education indicators ¹³⁶ . Collecting such data with communities (and IDP camps) in key outcome areas could be used to further support the development of planned outcomes and the impact of the humanitarian situation on different groups and what that might mean for response design (such as the level of access to assistance by the elderly or the impact on certain livelihoods). It would also enable the monitoring and evaluation of the priority indicators and impact against a baseline at the mid-point or at the end of a response. The post distribution monitoring surveys (PDM), which have demonstrated their high level of value in the phase 1 response, could be used as an additional tool to monitor the priority indicators. If a standardised sampling methodology is used, this would further enable the comparability of results over time.

¹³⁶ActionAid Kenya (2017) DEC phase 1 final report. October.

In addition, it is recommended to review ActionAid's other early warning indicators (both internal sources such as partners and external sources such as FEWSNET) in relation to the thresholds at which to voice the need for a humanitarian response with the relevant forums, donors and policy makers. The combination of the external early warning systems, combined with monitoring and evaluation of programme indicators, would provide a powerful information tool for slow onset disasters that includes the voices of affected communities and other key stakeholders.

The phase 1 emergency response to the drought in East Africa has prioritised responding to urgent needs in the areas of food security, WASH, NFIs, protection and accountability and impact. In addition, these areas have been complemented in some geographic locations by other ActionAid programmes that have focused on building the capacity and resilience of farmers to cope prepare and manage in the dry seasons. Although these were not specifically evaluated in the evaluation of the emergency DEC response, they were mentioned by several focus groups, especially in Kenya, that these trainings were of value to the communities. This was also reflected in the results when the communities engaged in the evaluation were asked to rank the ongoing key ingoing needs and priorities. The third overall ongoing need (after food and water assistance) was distributions of drought resistance seeds in time for planting, livestock management training and help with small business start-ups. Such initiatives have the potential to support households and communities to increase their resilience and reduce their sensitivity to drought conditions, as well as potentially enabling pastoralists and agro-pastoralists to restock their herds after destocking.

It was also noted by ActionAid Somaliland in their final phase 1 report to the DEC that it is highly recommended to have an integrated livelihood package for recovery, so that affected people will be able to restart life again. Especially in Kenya, although emergency needs are still present, the evaluation found a trend that affected communities are now prioritising recovery and resilience related interventions such as restocking, crop production, rehabilitation of water points and income generating activities. Some communities have also focused on livelihood diversification such as poultry production and growing vegetables^{137 138}. There were several other examples in Kenya of community initiatives already underway, or planned to be underway. These could be reviewed further and potentially supported by ActionAid and used as examples of best practice for other communities across the region. A common theme for such initiatives was communities working and collaborating together. It is recommended that ActionAid continue to build on this theme in future programme work, as well as capacity building, to enhance resilience.

Further to this, in the framework of the main livelihood of the communities being either agro-pastoral or pastoral, further research is recommended into initiatives that have the potential enhance such traditional livelihoods and increase resilience. For example, fodder production, farmer field schools, seed production, livestock health and sustainable pasture management, connecting communities with early warning systems and land conflict resolution engaging local decision makers/government. If this is complemented by livelihood diversification this could provide households with additional options and security during lean months and dry seasons, in the event that traditional livelihoods cannot sustain them for a period of time.

Overall, the phase 1 response was designed to address humanitarian issues, such as food and water shortages, increasing protection risks and malnutrition, in the context of an emergency programme. A major finding of the evaluation was that the assistance to address these challenges was relevant and effective, with the impact clearly voiced throughout the included communities. The model of enabling women and local organisations to plan and lead the delivery of assistance contributed to the effectiveness. ActionAid's coordination and engagement with different actors and technical coordination groups (including establishing these in places) had a powerful effect.

¹³⁷ActionAid Somaliland (2017) DEC phase 1 response final report. October.

¹³⁸ActionAid Somaliland (2017) DEC phase 1 response Real Time Evaluation.

Conclusion

Taking into account these successes and the feedback from the communities and other stakeholders about the future of those affected by drought, emergency humanitarian assistance should still be anticipated, monitored and provided for vulnerable households and communities. However, building on the integration of resilience programming into ActionAid's body of work would reduce the vulnerability of communities (including IDPs) to climatic shocks, which are reported to be increasing in frequency in the region.

There were also elements of the phase 1 response that were highly sustainable in nature due to being knowledge based, which had a demonstrated impact. For example, training women in protection services and women's rights, who then go on to train other women and raise awareness at events. In addition, for the communities that had contact with decision makers such as local government structures, it was community committees that were the catalyst for this, so reinforcing these and building on the participatory review and reflection processes (PRRP) model is key. These elements should continue to be entwined in humanitarian (and resilience) programmes, especially as they are in the framework of ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature and approach. Other connected challenges or consequences include increasing instability, displacement, issues with access to pasture and resources, reductions in school attendance, lack of access to health services, and protection risks. Many of these areas are already being addressed by ActionAid as they have shown that they undermine efforts to build resilience and reduce vulnerability to disasters. Therefore, strategies to address these should continue to be included in programme design, as feasible by ActionAid or in coordination with other agencies.

