



Malnutrition screening of an under five children at the Elwak Health Centre, Gedo Region, Somalia

Regional Drought Response Review – East Africa

CAFOD / Trócaire

April – June 2023



CST Ethiopia

Supported by
CAFOD * SCIAF Trócaire

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Acronyms

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CSG	County Steering Group (Kenya)
CST	CAFOD, SCIAF, Trócaire (Ethiopia)
CTP	CAFOD and Trócaire Partnership (South Sudan)
CTP	Cash Transfer Programming
CVA	Cash Voucher Assistance
EPP	Emergency Preparedness Planning
FCM	Feedback and Complaint Mechanism
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IGA	Income Generating Activity
INGO	International Non-governmental Organisation
IPC	Integrated Phase Classification
KII	Key Informant Interview
MEB	Minimum Expenditure Basket
NDMA	National Drought Management Authority (Kenya)
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
PDM	Post-Distribution Monitoring
PSS	Psychosocial Support
RNA	Rapid Needs Assessment
RRC	Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (South Sudan)
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UN OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
VSLA	Village Saving and Loan Association
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WESCOORD	Water and Environmental Sanitation Coordination mechanism (Kenya)
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme

Executive Summary

The East Africa region is continuing to experience the longest and most severe drought on record, threatening lives and livelihoods, including of millions of refugees and internally displaced people. CAFOD and Trócaire are responding to the drought in Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, and Somalia and, at the time of this review, CAFOD have provided 2,036,214 GBP and Trócaire 1,336,000 EUR of internal funding raised from their respective publics through appeal mechanisms focused on food insecurity.

The objective of this process was to undertake a mid-term review of the regional drought response to flesh out lessons and experiences from the first phase of implementation, assess the design and suggest improvements for the remaining phase, and to shape future responses. The scope of the review was focused on learning and reflection, rather than accountability, and the methodology was designed to facilitate country and regional level learning to help identify what is working well and what could be improved.

The review report has been structured to capture both regional and country level findings and recommendations. Country level findings can be found in the respective country chapters.

Regional Findings

To what extent does the response meet local needs and adapt to changing needs at different phases of the crisis? (Appropriateness)

Engagement of affected communities in needs identification and design of drought response projects is common across all four countries, as is the triangulation of data sources. The drought response activities across the four countries are appropriate and appreciated by affected communities, however, gaps were highlighted during the review often linked to the high levels of needs and vulnerability versus the available resources for the drought response. Consistent practice of conducting rapid needs assessments (RNAs), and more strategic resource planning at the country office level, could help with greater precision in the identification of needs and a more strategic use of limited resources. Adaptations during project implementation were not well evidenced, however, many of the projects had a short implementation period.

Is the response connected to resilience and longer-term programmes in the different countries? (Connectedness)

There is evidence in all four countries of links to resilience and longer-term programmes, specifically in project locations where the country office has existing programming. However, this is not well articulated in the drought response strategies

or project proposals and should be more systematically considered during strategy development and proposal design processes.

Some of the countries incorporated resilience into the design of the drought response projects, however, this was not consistent across all countries and highly dependent on the differing contexts and levels of life-saving needs. Nonetheless, country offices which implemented multi-purpose cash found that it led to support for income generating activities, food production and/or asset protection.

How well coordinated is the response in the different countries, and with what consequences? (Coordination)

There is consistent coordination with other humanitarian actors across the four countries, particularly at regionalised levels within the countries,¹ which are supporting information sharing, influencing project design, and ensuring that the duplication of activities is avoided and that the most vulnerable are reached. Nonetheless, some countries should continue to prioritise consistent engagement with coordination mechanisms, particularly with clusters/sector working groups to ensure they are following sector standards.

It was beyond the scope of this review to provide a deep analysis of the incorporation of partnership principles and approaches; however, there were no issues raised related to partnerships during the review and there was consistency across all four countries that communication with local partners was effective, and local partners feel empowered and supported to lead implementation. One theme which arose across some of the country offices, was greater collaboration with local partners on resource mobilisation to ensure continued programming to respond to needs and gaps.

Partner-led coordination in protection sub-clusters or partner-managed GBV referral pathways have complemented coordination and localisation efforts in Somalia and South Sudan, and on-going support to these partners is needed to continue their reputation as a strong local GBV actor.

Is the response providing vulnerable communities with life-saving and life-sustaining assistance in a timely manner? (Effectiveness)

Most of the countries are using multiple sources of early warning information to inform the country strategies and business development; however, there is not consistency by all country offices with linking this information with timely resource mobilisation and response.

A principled and participatory targeting approach is employed by all four countries, with clear evidence that the drought response projects are reaching the most

¹ For example, a country level in Kenya, or zonal level in Ethiopia.

vulnerable. Nonetheless, the levels of funding available means that needs are outweighing the resources across the whole region.

To what extent are protection and accountability supporting design and implementation of the response? (Protection & Accountability)

Consistent engagement of affected populations across all stages of the project management cycle is evidenced in all four countries; including project design, targeting and selection, feedback, and complaints mechanisms (FCMs), and post-distribution monitoring (PDM). Country offices and partners across the region habitually adopt community-based approaches, particularly through the creation of different 'community committees' to guarantee consistent community engagement. Nonetheless, community orientation on FCMs is not consistent across the region, and documenting and responding to feedback could be more systematic.

There is evidence of investment in, and the implementation of, protection mainstreaming across the four countries, with strong integration of GBV activities and referral pathways in Somalia and South Sudan which is increasing the resilience of GBV survivors. Protection mainstreaming tools, such as protection context analysis and sector checklists, are being used across the region; however, there is a lack of consistency in the utilisation of the same tools in each country, with staff still struggling to understand what specific tool should be used when. There is also confusion between GBV, gender, and protection mainstreaming. Further investment in stronger monitoring of protection mainstreaming, and the development of protection mainstreaming action plans, could address these challenges.

Recommendations

Appropriateness

- Consistently conduct rapid needs assessments (RNAs) to ensure greater precision in the identification of needs.
- Drought response strategies should be updated with a greater emphasis on resource mobilisation and resource planning, and closely linked to regularly updated contingency plans.

Connectedness

- Linkages between emergency response and longer-term programming should be more systematically considered during strategy development and proposal design processes.

Coordination

- Ensure consistent engagement with coordination mechanisms, particularly with clusters/sector working groups, to ensure sector standards are followed.

- Greater collaboration with local partners on advocacy and fundraising to ensure resources are continuously mobilised to respond to the needs and gaps.

Effectiveness

- Early warning information should be consistently linked with timely and well-resourced advocacy and fundraising campaigns to ensure timely humanitarian response and heighten awareness on the needs and vulnerability levels across the region.

Protection and accountability

- Stronger investment in the monitoring of protection mainstreaming, including introducing protection mainstreaming action plans.
- Country offices from across the region could benefit from sharing experiences and learning in protection mainstreaming to systematise the utilisation of protection mainstreaming tools.²

² Trócaire is already addressing this in the three countries they work in – Ethiopia, Somalia, and South Sudan.

Introduction

CAFOD and Trócaire are responding to one of the worst droughts in decades in East Africa, in Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan and Somalia. Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD) is the official development and humanitarian relief agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales whose mission is to promote human development and social justice in witness to Christian faith and gospel values by supporting long-term development, advocacy, and humanitarian relief. Trócaire is an international development and humanitarian NGO headquartered in Ireland with offices in 15 locations in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Central America and has been working in partnership with local organisations and communities to tackle the root causes of poverty, injustice, and violence. The two organisations are members of Catholic Internationalis (CI), with similar persuasions, and run joint offices in Ethiopia and South Sudan.

The East Africa region is continuing to experience the longest and most severe drought on record, threatening lives and livelihoods, including of millions of refugees and internally displaced people. Relentless drought and high food prices have weakened many people's ability to grow crops, raise livestock and buy food. The dramatic food insecurity situation in drought-affected areas is expected to persist, driving high humanitarian needs well through 2023, with forecasts predicting a sixth failed rainy season in March-May 2023. Harvests have yielded little and water sources have dried up. Conflict and insecurity continue to intersect with the drought emergency. As conditions continue to worsen, hundreds of thousands of people have been forced to flee in search of safety and assistance. The combined effect of the drought and other crises have worsened the humanitarian situation across the region, with more than 46.5 million reported to be people in need across the four countries when the CAFOD and Trócaire regional drought response began in 2022.³

At the time of this review, CAFOD have provided 2,036,214 GBP of internal funding to drought response projects in Kenya, Ethiopia, and South Sudan; and Trócaire have provided 1,336,000 EUR of internal funding to drought response projects in Ethiopia, Somalia, and South Sudan.

Country	CAFOD (GBP)	Trócaire (EUR)	Other funding leveraged
Kenya	828,896	-	
Ethiopia	783,750	415,000	
Somalia	-	605,000	
South Sudan	423,568	316,000	
Total	2,036,214	1,336,000	

³ 6.4 million people in need in Kenya (UN OCHA December 2022); more than 20 million people in need in Ethiopia (Humanitarian Response Plan 2022); 7.7 million people in need in Somalia (Humanitarian Response Plan 2022); and 12.4 million people in need in South Sudan (Humanitarian Response Plan 2022).

Methodology

Scope

The scope of this mid-term review are the emergency drought response projects across CAFOD and Trócaire country offices in four countries in East Africa – Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, and South Sudan - funded by internal appeals mechanisms related to food insecurity.⁴ The project time frame considered was from January 2022 to February 2023. An overview of the funded projects can be found in Annex C.

The scope of the review was focused on learning and reflection, rather than accountability to affected populations or donors. The methodology was designed to facilitate country and regional level learning, and examine programmes as they are still unfolding, to help identify what is working well and what could be improved. As such, CAFOD and Trócaire hired an independent consultant to work with the two organisations across the four countries. The target audience for the review is the staff and partners of CAFOD and Trócaire across the four countries, and at the respective HQ levels.

Design

As this mid-term review is focused on learning and reflection, the methodological approach was mostly qualitative, with qualitative methods used for data collection across all four countries with the exception of Kenya who complemented their data collection with a household survey of programme participants. Qualitative interviews were conducted through key informant interviews and focus group discussions, and this was complemented by reflection and learning sessions in each of the four countries, and a thorough desk review of project documentation from each of the four countries.

Approach	Source	Activities
Desk review	Country & project level documentation	Each country provided the consultant with their drought response strategy and project documents; including proposals, reports, and baseline surveys/needs assessments (where conducted). This was complemented with contextual information from inter-agency coordination mechanisms, e.g., Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs), situation reports, etc.
Design & inception workshop & meetings	CAFOD & Trócaire staff	An online regional planning workshop with programme staff from all four countries was held to jointly identify the review questions.

⁴ CAFOD's World Food Crisis Fund and Trócaire's Horn of Africa Appeal.

		A secondary meeting was held to agree upon the regional review matrix containing the review questions, data sources, data collection tools, and sampling approaches.
Qualitative data collection	Internal & external project stakeholders	<p>Review teams were formed in each country and were complemented where possible with an external member.⁵</p> <p>The review teams conducted the data collection in-country, covering most of the external stakeholders – whilst the consultant conducted KIs with internal stakeholders and hosted reflection and learning sessions with each country office.</p> <p>More details are provided in Annex B.</p>
Analysis & findings	Qualitative data	Data analysis and drafting of the findings was independently completed by the consultant based on the qualitative data collected.
Validation	CAFOD & Trócaire staff	Validation and feedback was provided through an online validation workshop with review teams from all four countries, leading to the finalisation of the review findings and corresponding report.

Specific Objectives and Questions

As stated in the Terms of Reference (ToR), the objective is to undertake a mid-term review of the regional drought response to flesh out lessons and experiences from the first phase of implementation, assess the design and suggest improvements for the remaining phase, and to shape future responses.

The following five key review questions, and corresponding secondary questions, were developed during the design workshop and structure the findings in this review report.

Appropriateness: to what extent does the response meet local needs and adapt to changing needs at different phases of the crisis?

- Which parts of the response have been the most appropriate and why?
- Are there lifesaving or life-sustaining needs that are not addressed by this response and why?
- How did the response adapt to meet the changing needs of the affected communities?

⁵ CST's review team included a staff member from Trócaire's Somalia Country Office; Somali's review team included Trócaire's Humanitarian Protection Advisor; and CTP's review team included CAFOD's Emergency Response Officer (WASH).

- To what extent do the project designs reflect identified needs and priorities of affected communities, including those of vulnerable groups?

Connectedness: is the response connected to resilience and early recovery programmes in the different countries?

- To what extent were adequate links to resilience and early recovery actors and interventions created?
- Is there any evidence that the response is helping affected communities to better withstand future shocks, such as subsequent or future droughts?
- What is the community's perspective on the support they need to sustain change?
- To what extent has there been engagement with communities and local and national government on building resilience?

Coordination: how well coordinated is the response in the different countries, and with what consequences?

- How have coordination mechanisms, that partners and country offices participate in, supported in providing coordinated and complementary assistance to those in greatest need? Is there any evidence that coordination helped to avoid duplications and to fill gaps?
- How was project design influenced by sector working groups?
- To what extent did the communication and collaboration between country offices and partners prove effective in facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the prevailing circumstances on the ground, timely response and in mobilising resources?

Effectiveness: is the response providing vulnerable communities with life-saving and life-sustaining assistance in a timely manner?

- How did the response utilise early warning information and assessment reports to make timely decisions to undertake early response?
- To what extent was assistance provided according to need and reached the most vulnerable, according to the principles of humanity and impartiality?
- To what extent were cross-cutting issues such as gender, age, disability, and the environment given adequate consideration in the response?
- Did the response have any unintended, positive or negative effects on drought-affected people, local conflict dynamics, or national systems?

Protection and accountability: to what extent are protection and accountability supporting design and implementation of the response?

- How was protection context analysis incorporated into the response in each country?
- Is there evidence that partners' ensured protection mainstreaming and how was this monitored?
- To what extent are programme participants engaged in the design of the response projects?

- What evidence is there of programme participant feedback, including through complaints and feedback mechanisms, leading to project adaptations?

Limitations

Limited timeframe for design and inception: due to delays in the hiring process of the consultant(s) for the review, and other commitments delaying the start date of the selected consultant, in order to ensure data collection started in late April / early May as had been originally planned by CAFOD and Trócaire, the design and inception phase had to be concentrated into two weeks. The design and inception phase was particularly important as CAFOD and Trócaire sought a participatory process involving all four country offices in the agreement on the scope of the mid-term review and design of the questions and data collection methodology. A regional workshop was held as planned with high participation from the four countries; however, there was not enough time for sufficient engagement back and forth between the consultant and the country teams on the scope, questions, and tools for refinement, nor to train the review teams on data collection for evaluations and ensure a truly consistent approach to data collection. This was also complicated by delays in the access to organisational, country and project level information as part of the desk review. Nonetheless, a regional review matrix was developed and agreed upon, and there was not too much deviation across the four countries.

Broad scope: further time for discussion on the scope of the review, may have led to the scope being refined to focus on fewer criteria in more detail. Given the number of internal stakeholders involved in the review – two organisations across four countries – there was a delicate balance to ensure a participatory approach, taking into consideration all opinions, and an achievable scope. The consultant chose to prioritise a participatory approach which led to the review comprising of 5 key questions and 19 secondary questions to be answered across each of the four contexts. The majority of the secondary questions have been answered, but perhaps not to the level of desired detail and there are areas which require follow-up. Nonetheless, the review has resulted in a broad range of themes and recommendations to guide the regional and country level responses.

Multi-stakeholder consultancy team: reviews and evaluations with broader scopes and geographical coverage would benefit from the involvement of multiple stakeholders at all stages of the process; including with undertaking data analysis and drafting findings and recommendations which was completed by the one consultant alone. The challenges with the broader scope include a diversity in technical areas and a high number of themes for examination. Nonetheless, the review was designed with learning in mind, and it has provided time and space for reflection and learning across the four country offices and with HQ staff from both organisations, even if it has led to further areas for examination. In future mid-term

reviews or evaluations of this scope, the hiring of an independent evaluation team would allow for multi-stakeholder brainstorming on the findings and recommendations, and the inclusion of technical expertise, e.g., in food insecurity, cash transfer programming (CTP), and protection.

Peer exchange: it was originally envisaged that the review methodology would include peer learning and exchange between the four country offices, with nominated staff traveling to participate in the review of a different country office. Unfortunately, the limited timeframe for design and inception, as well as security constraints in some contexts, frustrated the attempts for a successful exchange with only one staff member from Somalia traveling to participate in the review process in Ethiopia. Nonetheless, staff from all four countries participated in the validation workshop, learning about the findings across each country individually as well as the regional themes which arose from the review.

Regional Findings

Appropriateness

To what extent does the response meet local needs and adapt to changing needs at different phases of the crisis?

Regional: Engagement of affected communities in needs identification and design of drought response projects is common across all four countries, as is the triangulation of data sources. The drought response activities across the four countries are appropriate and appreciated by affected communities, however, gaps were highlighted during the review often linked to the high levels of needs and vulnerability versus the available resources for the drought response. Consistent practice of conducting rapid needs assessments (RNAs), and more strategic resource planning at the country office level, could help with greater precision in the identification of needs and a more strategic use of limited resources. Adaptations during project implementation were not well evidenced, however, many of the projects had a short implementation period.

Ethiopia: Multi-purpose cash was found to be the most appropriate response in the Ethiopia context and is highly appreciated by the affected communities. However, at the time of the review, the cash transfer amount was not sufficient to cover household needs. Feedback from programme participants and affected communities highlighted that additional support with livelihoods (livestock particularly) and WASH is needed; however, there are limited resources available for a multi-sector response.

Needs identification involves the triangulation of data, including participation in the joint emergency taskforce needs assessment, hot spot mapping, IPC analysis, community consultations with representatives from vulnerable groups, and participatory project design involving affected communities and local government.

Kenya: CAFOD and partners are implementing a multi-sector drought response, focusing mainly on the provision of food and water, which are the most appropriate forms of support in the Kenya context. Nonetheless, programme participants and affected communities did highlight the need for continued assistance, a preference for cash and voucher assistance (CVA), and support with livelihoods and/or income generating activities.⁶

CAFOD and partners are utilising secondary data from IPC analysis and county government departments, complemented by meetings with affected communities to consult on their needs and priorities. There was not a consistent practice of conducting RNAs at the start of projects, which may have resulted in less precision

⁶ As stated below in the chapter on Kenya, mixed modalities for providing assistance to food insecure individuals were implemented based on community preference but also market functionality.

with the identification of needs, however this has been addressed in the second phase of projects which started in 2023.

Somalia: Through the triangulation of data sources, including RNAs, community engagement, and secondary data sources, the drought response projects in Somalia satisfactorily reflect the identified needs and priorities of affected communities. Unfortunately, the needs are vast, covering multiple sectors and high numbers of vulnerable people, which goes beyond the resources available to Trócaire.

The assistance provided is highly appreciated and appropriate to the crisis, especially food assistance, WASH and NFIs, but many gaps were raised by affected communities during the review process, particularly related to cash assistance, livelihoods, and WASH. Given the high level of needs and the resources available, it would be hard for Trócaire and partners to be able to provide comprehensive support as needed, and they are acting prudently with the limited resources they have. Nonetheless, greater precision with identifying gaps and prioritising life-saving needs could be supported with stronger resource planning.

South Sudan: The multi-sector support provided by the 'church appeal' project⁷ in South Sudan is appropriate because it is increasing food production and income generation capacity and is much appreciated by the affected communities. Nonetheless, there have been some challenges with timely implementation of components of the project, and programme participants provided feedback that there is a need for increased access to ox ploughs to best use the seeds provided and this has not been acted upon.

CAFOD & Trócaire in Partnership (CTP) and their local partners have adapted the project to meet the changing needs of the affected communities; for example, by changing the food security component from CVA to direct food distribution because of low availability of food items in the local markets. Needs identification involves the triangulation of secondary resources, community consultations and available needs assessment data.

Connectedness

Is the response connected to resilience and longer-term programmes in the different countries?

Regional: There is evidence in all four countries of links to resilience and longer-term programmes, specifically in project locations where the country office has existing

⁷ Unfortunately, given the security situation in country, data collection was focused on one multi-sector project implemented in Tonj North County, often referred to as the 'church appeal' project.

programming. However, this is not well articulated in the drought response strategies or project proposals and should be more systematically considered during strategy development and proposal design processes.

Some of the countries incorporated resilience into the design of the drought response projects, however, this was not consistent across all countries and highly dependent on the differing contexts and levels of live-saving needs. Nonetheless, country offices which implemented multi-purpose cash found that it led to support for income generating activities, food production and/or asset protection.

Ethiopia: In project locations where CAFOD, SCIAFF & Trócaire (CST) and their partners are already working, drought response projects are targeting the same communities receiving longer-term assistance; however, links to these programmes should be stronger to ensure a holistic package of services to the same affected communities. Nonetheless, the provision of multi-purpose cash is resulting in programme participants being able to strengthen their resilience and recover their livelihoods to some extent.

Continued system strengthening at the community and government levels through the crisis period has been challenging as the drought period has kept extending due to consecutive failed rains, resulting in higher emergency needs and, therefore, funding being reallocated to emergency activities, often at the request of donors and/or the government.

Kenya: It can be inferred from the consultations during the review that there are links between the drought response projects and CAFOD and partners' resilience and longer-term programmes, however, these links need to be better articulated in their drought response strategy and in project design processes. Although the drought response projects have a larger focus on addressing live-saving needs, there is clear evidence of resilience strengthening within the drought response projects, particularly related to boreholes, agroecology, and school feeding; and CAFOD is already looking at what is needed next - continued emergency response activities with agricultural and livestock support for food sustainability and livelihoods.

Somalia: Although links to resilience or longer-term programming could be better articulated in the drought response strategy and project designs – resulting in clearer and more intentional linkages; Trócaire and partners are integrating a degree of resilience into the drought response projects. It was clear from the feedback from programme participants and affected communities that their needs remain focused on emergency relief, implying that it is too early in the crisis in Somalia to consider implementing standalone resilience or early recovery programmes; nonetheless, resilience should continue to be integrated as per the needs identified.

Nonetheless, Trócaire continues to have strong focus on system strengthening at community and local government levels, despite the inherent challenges, particularly through their support to the District Health Boards.

South Sudan: CTP and partners designed the church appeal project with a strong emphasis on resilience including increased food production, access to water and WASH services, and protection issues linked to conflict. There is evidence that the project is helping affected communities to better withstand future shocks, however, the high volume of needs versus resources means that on-going programming is needed to ensure continued resilience.

CTP and partners put more emphasis on community level system strengthening than governmental; including the creation of DRR committees and provision of extension workers, given that government level systems are not established or robust.

Coordination

How well coordinated is the response in the different countries, and with what consequences?

Regional: There is consistent coordination with other humanitarian actors across the four countries, particularly at regionalised levels within the countries,⁸ which are supporting information sharing, influencing project design, and ensuring that the duplication of activities is avoided and that the most vulnerable are reached. Nonetheless, some countries should continue to prioritise consistent engagement with coordination mechanisms, particularly with clusters/sector working groups to ensure they are following sector standards.

It was beyond the scope of this review to provide a deep analysis of the incorporation of partnership principles and approaches; however, there were no issues raised related to partnerships during the review and there was consistency across all four countries that communication with local partners was effective, and local partners feel empowered and supported to lead implementation. One theme which arose across some of the country offices, was greater collaboration with local partners on resource mobilisation to ensure continued programming to respond to needs and gaps.

Partner-led coordination in protection sub-clusters or partner-managed GBV referral pathways have complemented coordination and localisation efforts in Somalia and South Sudan, and on-going support to these partners is needed to continue their reputation as a strong local GBV actor.

⁸ For example, a country level in Kenya, or zonal level in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia: Coordination through woreda and zonal coordination mechanisms is strong, including engagement in the emergency taskforce needs assessments, information and experience sharing through the clusters, and the coordination of humanitarian activities using the 5W matrix to avoid the duplication of activities. Project design is influenced by clusters; however, there are challenges with decision-making across CST and partners on the cash transfer amount. There are not cash cluster mechanisms at the local level which heighten this challenge.

There was good communication and collaboration between CST and partners, however, greater collaboration on resource mobilisation is needed to respond to the gaps and to continue emergency response activities where needed.

Kenya: From the consultations with representatives from the government coordination mechanisms, as well as during the reflection and learning session with CAFOD and partner staff, strong evidence of coordination was provided with the County Steering Groups (CSGs), including the coordination of humanitarian activities using monthly project reporting tools and project approvals by CSGs to avoid the duplication of activities. Nonetheless, there are challenges with consistent engagement in CSG coordination by all humanitarian actors, resulting in bi-lateral coordination to ensure avoiding duplication. CAFOD and partners consult the technical working groups to ensure sector standards are followed but have challenges with ensuring the minimum expenditure basket (MEB) is met 100% because of inflation and the elevated IPC levels.

CAFOD and partners highlighted the good flow of information between them, and the helpfulness of the technical support provided by CAFOD. One reflection for the future, is to ensure joint project kick-off meetings and plan more time for reflection and learning.

Somalia: Trócaire and their partners are strong in coordination, including engagement in (and leading) regional mechanisms and sub-clusters, sharing information and experience through the clusters, and coordinating humanitarian activities using 5W matrix to avoid the duplication of activities. Project design is influenced by clusters; however, the vast needs outweighing the available resources continues to challenge all humanitarian actors being able to ensure standardised assistance which meet Sphere Standards.

South Sudan: Coordination through the sub-national and national mechanisms is strong including information sharing through the clusters and the coordination of humanitarian activities using 5W matrix to avoid the duplication of activities. Furthermore, CTP is providing support to their partner TOCH with co-hosting the protection sub-cluster at the sub-national level and to develop and update GBV referral pathways (on-going resourcing is needed to maintain this).

For the church appeal project, CTP and partners used a consortium model which has faced challenges particularly regarding the sharing of resources; however, there is evidence of effective communication and collaboration between the three parties, including timely planning and monthly meetings.

Effectiveness

Is the response providing vulnerable communities with life-saving and life-sustaining assistance in a timely manner?

Regional: Most of the countries are using multiple sources of early warning information to inform the country strategies and business development; however, there is not consistency by all country offices with linking this information with timely resource mobilisation and response.

A principled and participatory targeting approach is employed by all four countries, with clear evidence that the drought response projects are reaching the most vulnerable. Nonetheless, the levels of funding available means that needs are outweighing the resources across the whole region.

Ethiopia: Numerous sources of early warning information are being utilised by CST and partners; however, this information could be better utilised for advocacy and resource mobilisation to increase attention to the crisis and access further funding.

A principled and participatory targeting approach is employed by CST and partners, ensuring that the most vulnerable are reached; and cross-cutting issues such as gender, age, disability, and the environment were given adequate consideration. The level of funding available means that vulnerability outweighs the resources.

Kenya: Numerous sources of early warning information are being utilised by CAFOD and partners, including FEWS NET, NDMA monthly drought bulletins, CSG presentations, and information from the Kenya Meteorological Department. However, this information has not equated to timely response because of challenges with fundraising.

A principled and participatory targeting approach is employed by CAFOD and partners to ensure the most vulnerable are reached; and cross-cutting issues are given adequate consideration. However, as mentioned previously, the level of funding available means that vulnerability outweighs the resources, and this is resulting in programme participants sharing assistance.

Somalia: Trócaire and partners are providing timely life-saving and life-sustaining assistance, clearly reaching the most vulnerable; however, Trócaire and partners reflected that contingency planning, including scenarios and programme-level

preparedness, for the impacts of drought could better enable timely response driven by early warning information. Nonetheless, the Trócaire nutrition surveillance monitoring conducted on a quarterly basis is boosting the availability of timely information on vulnerability levels but, as with the other countries, the level of funding available means that vulnerability outweighs the resources.

South Sudan: The use of early warning information by CTP and partners to make timely decisions to undertake early response could be improved and systematised. CTP and partners are using community-based targeting triangulated with IPC analysis to identify programme participants, and there is clear evidence that affected communities are engaged and sensitised on vulnerability criteria – and agree that the most vulnerable are targeted. The level of funding available means that vulnerability outweighs the resources.

Protection and Accountability

To what extent are protection and accountability supporting design and implementation of the response?

Regional: Consistent engagement of affected populations across all stages of the project management cycle is evidenced in all four countries; including project design, targeting and selection, feedback, and complaints mechanisms (FCMs), and post-distribution monitoring (PDM). Country offices and partners across the region habitually adopt community-based approaches, particularly through the creation of different 'community committees' to guarantee consistent community engagement. Nonetheless, community orientation on FCMs is not consistent across the region, and documenting and responding to feedback could be more systematic.

There is evidence of investment in, and the implementation of, protection mainstreaming across the four countries, with strong integration of GBV activities and referral pathways in Somalia and South Sudan which is increasing the resilience of GBV survivors. Protection mainstreaming tools, such as protection context analysis and sector checklists, are being used across the region; however, there is a lack of consistency in the utilisation of the same tools in each country, with staff still struggling to understand what specific tool should be used when. There is also confusion between GBV, gender, and protection mainstreaming. Further investment in stronger monitoring of protection mainstreaming, and the development of protection mainstreaming action plans, could address these challenges.

Ethiopia: There is good evidence of protection mainstreaming, and there has been existing investment in capacity strengthening on protection mainstreaming and accountability to affected populations (AAP) with partners. Nonetheless, the use of

regularly updated protection context analysis could be improved, as could regular protection mainstreaming monitoring.

There is clear evidence that affected communities are involved in project design, and FCMs are in place in each project location. Nonetheless, orientation on FCMs and documenting feedback and complaints needs improving.

Kenya: There is evidence of the incorporation of gender mainstreaming, safe programming, and AAP in the drought response projects; however, from the reflection and learning session 'protection context analysis' and 'protection mainstreaming' as concepts were not fully understood. Nonetheless, CAFOD are continuously investing in their protection mainstreaming capacity strengthening.

AAP was a particular strength and well considered in the drought response projects, across all stages of the project management cycle; with strong evidence of affected communities' involvement in project design and orientation of affected communities on FCMs.

Somalia: There is clear evidence of protection mainstreaming in the drought response projects, and there is existing investment by Trócaire in capacity strengthening on protection mainstreaming with programme teams and partners. Nonetheless, the country protection context analysis should be updated and there could be improvements made to protection mainstreaming monitoring.

Programme participants and affected communities provided positive feedback on accountability, consistently highlighting their involvement in project design and targeting, and their understanding of the FCMs available to them.

South Sudan: There is some evidence of protection mainstreaming in the church appeal project, with active engagement of the affected communities in targeting the most vulnerable and consultation on their needs. Furthermore, CTP and partners use conflict analysis, 'community dialogues', and safety audits to ensure activities are accepted, accessible, inclusive, and safe. However, programme participants and affected communities are not consistently engaged in project design and have poor awareness of the FCMs available to them.

Resource constraints

Resource 'constraints' was an overarching theme coming from the review findings; therefore, this section has been included to emphasise the challenge.

Country offices, partners, other humanitarian actors, local government, and affected communities in all four countries raised the inability to effectively meet life-saving needs of affected communities and target all the most vulnerable individuals

in an affected community, because of the lack of sufficient and consistent funding. As such, during the review, limitations of the assistance provided (e.g., short project durations or limited amounts of assistance distributed) was often raised by programme participants and affected communities. This is a challenge arising for the entirety of the humanitarian community across the East Africa region, heightened by low media coverage and attentions focused on the Ukraine crisis, rather than a specific challenge for CAFOD and Trócaire.

Nonetheless, although the country offices regularly consult a variety of early warning information from local, national, and international levels; there is not consistent or systematic use of early warning information, across the region, for proactive fundraising/resource mobilisation or for advocacy to heighten awareness of the food security crisis in the respective countries.⁹ At the validation workshop, one staff member raised the 'missed' opportunities to pro-actively engage donors and the media, before and during the on-going crisis, on the contextual realities of the region. Nevertheless, it should also be noted that there are restrictive governments in some of the countries in the region who do not appreciate NGOs' efforts in advocacy and awareness raising on the crises in their countries and are often also slow to officially announce drought or food security crises.

There were also references by the country offices that the internal appeal funding provided by CAFOD and Trócaire HQs is small-scale and transferred in batches which makes strategic and holistic response planning difficult and often results in decisions to fund short-term projects, gaps in addressing needs, and/or the reduction of assistance being provided. That said, appeal funding should be viewed as flexible funding for rapid response and to leverage funding from institutional donors, rather than relied upon as the main source of funding for an emergency. There was not clear evidence in some country offices of proactive engagement of institutional donors on the organisation's readiness to respond, which could have resulted in the drought response projects leveraging funds to scale the programmes and the repurposing of the appeal funds for other needs or gaps.

There could also have been greater internal discussions across the two organisations around the challenges to fundraise from the UK and Irish public, or more regular funding forecasts/analysis provided to country offices; however, Trócaire HQ did develop funding scenarios for their Horn of Africa Appeal based on different amounts that could be fundraised from the public, with thresholds for when funding would be released to the affected countries. There are also challenges with country offices providing regular situation reports and answering other requests for information from their respective HQs to be able to boost fundraising efforts from their side. Country offices are responsible for their own fundraising and more human

⁹ Excluding the Trócaire Somalia Country Office whose Country Director made significant efforts to heighten awareness of the crisis in 2021/22 hosting TV and radio crews from the UK, Ireland, and Australia.

resources could have been dedicated to focusing on this given the dire funding situation.

Given these challenges, it is recommended that the drought response strategies could be updated with a greater emphasis on resource mobilisation, on resource planning, on identifying gaps with greater precision by consistently conducting RNAs, and on links between the drought response activities to longer-term or resilience programming to ensure holistic assistance where possible. In addition, the drought response strategies should link to contingency plans that include different scenarios for project scalability and which are updated regularly based on the levels of funding received.

Recommendations

Appropriateness

- Consistently conduct rapid needs assessments (RNAs) to ensure greater precision in the identification of needs.
- Drought response strategies should be updated with a greater emphasis on resource mobilisation and resource planning, and closely linked to regularly updated contingency plans.

Connectedness

- Linkages between emergency response and longer-term programming should be more systematically considered during strategy development and proposal design processes.

Coordination

- Ensure consistent engagement with coordination mechanisms, particularly with clusters/sector working groups, to ensure sector standards are followed.
- Greater collaboration with local partners on advocacy and fundraising to ensure resources are continuously mobilised to respond to the needs and gaps.

Effectiveness

- Early warning information should be consistently linked with timely and well-resourced advocacy and fundraising campaigns to ensure timely humanitarian response and heighten awareness on the needs and vulnerability levels across the region.

Protection and accountability

- Stronger investment in the monitoring of protection mainstreaming, including introducing protection mainstreaming action plans.

- Country offices from across the region could benefit from sharing experiences and learning in protection mainstreaming to systematise the utilisation of protection mainstreaming tools.¹⁰

¹⁰ Trócaire is already addressing this in the three countries they work in – Ethiopia, Somalia, and South Sudan.

Ethiopia

Country Overview

CST is a merged entity of CAFOD, SCIAF and Trócaire, managing joint programmes since 2000. CST are operation in five regions of Ethiopia in partnership with more than 20 local partners including three Dioecian Caritas. CST has three broad goal areas, which include resilience communities (livelihood, DRR, natural resource management), women's social and economic empowerment and humanitarian response under their current country strategy.

At the time of review, seven drought response projects have been funded in Ethiopia, focused primarily on multi-purpose cash, with water trucking included in two of the projects, and were implemented in Borena Zone and South Omo Zone in partnership with three partners - Agri Service Ethiopia (ASE), Community Initiative Facilitation & Assistance (CIFA), and ECC-SDCO/S (Ethiopian Catholic Church Social and Development Commission Branch Office of Soddo-Omorate Sub-Branch Office). CAFOD provided 783,750 GBP and Trócaire 385,000 EUR through their respective appeal mechanisms, reaching 41,597 direct programme participants. More information can be found in Annex C.

Findings

To what extent does the response meet local needs and adapt to changing needs at different phases of the crisis?

Multi-purpose cash was found to be the most appropriate response in the Ethiopia context and is highly appreciated by the affected communities. However, at the time of the review, the cash transfer amount was not sufficient to cover household needs. Feedback from programme participants and affected communities highlighted that additional support with livelihoods (livestock particularly) and WASH is needed; however, there are limited resources available for a multi-sector response.

Needs identification involves the triangulation of data, including participation in the joint emergency taskforce needs assessment, hot spot mapping, IPC analysis, community consultations with representatives from vulnerable groups, and participatory project design involving affected communities and local government.

Which parts of the response have been the most appropriate and why?

According to CST and their partners, cash is the most appropriate intervention as this enabled programme participants to meet their critical food needs, as well as strengthen resilience through asset protection, i.e., multi-purpose cash allowed programme participants to buy and / or care for their livestock. This was echoed by the consultations with programme participants, community leaders and local government representatives.

"The multipurpose cash I have received was most important and the only support because it gives me a freedom to spend on my priority needs... I was in need of goat and hens support as they are drought resistant animals... I have used a portion of the cash for goat and hen procurement."

- Programme participant, Ethiopia¹¹

However, it was noted by CST, partners, programme participants, and the affected communities that the cash transfer amount was not sufficient to cover household needs. At the start of the drought response projects, CST followed the minimum expenditure basket (MEB) recommendations from the cash working groups, however, inflation impacted the market assessment findings and projects were adapted at the local level to follow the guidance provided by local government. CST and partners did try to rectify this with some project adaptation and by trying to compliment assistance with assistance being provided by other humanitarian actors.

"The support was not adequate to cover household foods and animal feed."

- Programme participant, Ethiopia¹²

Are there life-saving or life-sustaining needs that are not addressed by this response and why?

"Livestock feed and water for household use."

- Programme Participant, Ethiopia¹³

There were not frequent references in the consultations with programme participants and affected communities to needs other than cash and water; however, there were frequent references to either needing additional cash assistance for livestock – or direct support with livestock interventions.

"One of the primary needs of the community was to save their livestock from death during drought period."

- Programme participant, Ethiopia¹⁴

Although the multi-purpose cash assistance allowed programme participants to prioritise their own needs, and for some it included livestock costs, the cash transfer amount provided was not sufficient to adequately support household and livestock consumption. At the start of the drought in southern Ethiopia, CST had provided livelihoods support, however, the vast humanitarian needs versus the resources available meant that they prioritised the delivery of multi-purpose cash assistance.

¹¹ KII, Moyale Woreda, Borena Zone

¹² FGD, Moyale Woreda, Borena Zone

¹³ KII, Moyale Woreda, Borena Zone

¹⁴ FGD, Moyale Woreda, Borena Zone

"The focus of responses provided by humanitarian actors was life-saving like food. I recommend considering sustainable interventions like livelihood diversification that will help to sustain the lives of the community. In the context of drought, you might not to stick with the proposed interventions, you have to be flexible for the changing situations... we had communities engaged in milk dairy value chain. When they failed to collect milk due to drought, we have supported the communities to engage in other income generating activities after conducting a market assessment."

- NGO representative, Ethiopia¹⁵

Nonetheless, in the drought response project locations where CST and partners were already working, projects did target the same communities receiving livelihoods or other resilience strengthening assistance. However, it is a challenge to ensure this consistently whilst also adhering to the principle of humanity. Some project locations are new to CST and partners and were selected for emergency response as they had been identified as IPC Level 4 or above.

Similarly, with the water trucking, the support provided was appreciated and deemed appropriate, but the support was only provided in two of the seven funded drought response projects. This was not frequently raised by programme participants or community leaders but was by a peer NGO and local government. Again, this is linked to the need to prioritise assistance as the level of humanitarian needs outweigh the resources available.

"WASH intervention in the area is the most critical and appropriate response because it has multidimensional impact in the lives of the community. Despite the community needs, intervention on creating access to water for irrigation, livestock and drinking was not adequate."

- NGO representative, Ethiopia¹⁶

"From our perspective, if NGOs give emphasis in developing underground water and the communities coping capacity will be strengthened."

- Government representative, Ethiopia¹⁷

How did the response adapt to meet the changing needs of the affected communities?

Although the duration of the projects in Ethiopia were short making project adaptation more challenging, as mentioned above it was highlighted by programme participants and affected communities that the cash transfer amounts

¹⁵ KII, Dorcas

¹⁶ KII, Dorcas

¹⁷ KII, DRM Office, Teltele Woreda, Borena Zone

were not sufficient because of rising inflation. According to CST and partners, some adaptations were made to cash amounts, but this was not consistently applied.

"We preferred to have in kind food support rather than cash because the cash was not adequate to buy household foods as there was price inflation of the food items."
- Programme Participant, Ethiopia

To what extent do the project designs reflect identified needs and priorities of affected communities, including those of vulnerable groups?

CST triangulate data to identify the needs and priorities of affected communities, including participation in the emergency taskforce needs assessments, secondary data, community consultations with representatives from vulnerable groups, and participatory project design involving affected communities and local government.¹⁸ Secondary data included IPC analysis and UN OCHA hotspot mapping. Some of CST's partners also led their own rapid needs assessments (RNAs) and it was reflected that regular multi-sector needs assessment should be conducted more frequently to better understand localised needs and to ensure independence from government-led needs assessments.

Is the response connected to resilience and longer-term programming?

In project locations where CST and partners are already working, drought response projects are targeting the same communities receiving longer-term assistance; however, links to these programmes should be stronger to ensure a holistic package of services to the same affected communities. Nonetheless, the provision of multi-purpose cash is resulting in programme participants being able to strengthen their resilience and recover their livelihoods to some extent.

Continued system strengthening at the community and government levels through the crisis period has been challenging as the drought period has kept extending due to consecutive failed rains, resulting in higher emergency needs and, therefore, funding being reallocated to emergency activities, often at the request of donors and/or the government.

To what extent were adequate links to resilience and early recovery actors and interventions created?

In project locations where CST and partners were already working, drought response projects did target the same communities receiving livelihood and resilience assistance. However, this was challenging to do consistently whilst also ensuring that the most vulnerable were reached. CST senior management gave an example that in Borena they supported the same women benefitting from livelihoods with livestock assistance based on the fact they were the most vulnerable, but this was not always

¹⁸ KIIs and FGDs with programme participants and community leaders confirmed this.

the case and in some of the drought response projects vulnerability criteria meant they needed to work in new areas of intervention.

"As Moyale is drought prone area most of the intervention are focused on emergency support with short term outlook. [They have] tried to link the emergency responses to long term development and resilience. I know [they have] other projects included cash for work to rehabilitate and develop water points and range land management."

- Government representative¹⁹

From the reflection and learning session, CST and partners did feel that links to resilience and early recovery interventions could be stronger and would like to consult communities further and undertake multi-sector responses. Specific advice on this was provided by a peer NGO (see above) and local government representatives (see below).

"I suggest to focus on agricultural development (seed and irrigation) with focus on drought resistance and early maturing vegetables."

- Government representative²⁰

"I advise to focus on developing underground water for irrigation as the area is rich in the underground water and organise the community in groups to engage in diversified income generating activities."

- Government representative²¹

Is there any evidence that the response is helping affected communities to better withstand future shocks, such as subsequent or future droughts?

The provision of multi-purpose cash did result in programme participants being able to strengthen their resilience and recover their livelihoods, but to what extent was beyond the scope of this review. However, asset protection (livestock), as mentioned above, was highlighted frequently during the consultations with programme participants and affected communities.

"I was able to buy food for [the] household, goat, hen, cow and cover medical cost for my children. Now I'm able to collect eggs and milk and use for household consumption and the goat is pregnant."

- Programme participant, Ethiopia²²

¹⁹ KII, Finance and Economic Development Office, Moyale Woreda, Borena Zone

²⁰ KII, Finance and Economic Development Office, Moyale Woreda, Borena Zone

²¹ KII, DRM Office, Teltele Woreda, Borena Zone

²² KII, Dasenech Woreda, South Omo Zone

"I bought three goats; this will help if sold when I face shocks. I have saved 2000 ETB at Omo Micro finance institution for emergency issues."

- Programme participant, Ethiopia²³

There were no specific DRR related activities included in the projects; however, CST and partner's do support DRR at the community level through DRR community committees in their longer-term programming. This link could have been better examined during the development of the emergency drought response strategy and during project design.

What is the community's perspective on the support they need to sustain change?

"The support was crucial; we couldn't survive without the cash support."

- Programme participant, Ethiopia²⁴

Given the on-going drought and vast numbers of people in need, feedback from the programme participants and affected communities largely focused on the appreciation of the support received from CST and partners; apart from the need for greater livelihoods support already mentioned. Greater consultation with communities is needed on when and if early recovery activities should now be introduced.

"There is no community structure to sustain the project results. But now it is raining, strengthen[ing] the agricultural practices [will allow] the project participants to sustain by their own.

- Community leader, Ethiopia²⁵

To what extent has there been engagement with communities and local and national government on building resilience? For example, system strengthening to improve response and mitigation to the negative impact of future droughts?

From the consultations with CST senior management and government representatives, CST and their partners are closely collaborating with communities and local government, and their longer-term programming engages both in system strengthening, including livestock monitoring, vaccination, and insurance programmes as well as supporting locally developed DRR planning through DRR community committees. Nonetheless, it was highlighted that continued system strengthening through the crisis period has become challenging as the period keeps extending due to consecutive failed rains, resulting in emergency needs and, therefore, funding being reallocated to emergency activities, often at the request of donors and/or the government.

²³ KII, Dasenech Woreda, South Omo Zone

²⁴ KII, Moyale Woreda, Borena Zone

²⁵ KII, Teltele Woreda, Borena Zone

How well coordinated is the response and with what consequences?

Coordination through woreda and zonal coordination mechanisms is strong, including engagement in the emergency taskforce needs assessments, information and experience sharing through the clusters, and the coordination of humanitarian activities using the 5W matrix to avoid the duplication of activities. Project design is influenced by clusters; however, there are challenges with decision-making across CST and partners on the cash transfer amount. There are not cash cluster mechanisms at the local level which heighten this challenge.

There was also good communication and collaboration between CST and partners, however, greater collaboration on resource mobilisation is needed to respond to the gaps and to continue emergency response activities where needed.

How have coordination mechanisms supported in providing coordinated and complementary assistance to those in greatest need? Is there any evidence that coordination helped to avoid duplications and to fill gaps?

In Ethiopia, the government leads humanitarian coordination, with UN agencies and NGOs leading/co-leading clusters. Given the political influence and the size of the country, CST's partners prioritise their coordination efforts at more localised levels; particularly at the zonal level (woreda level coordination mechanisms exist and are also utilised by CST partners but there was consensus from internal and external stakeholders interviewed that this level is less strong).

From the consultations with government representatives and peer NGOs, as well as the reflection and learning session with CST and partner staff, coordination through the local mechanisms was strong including engagement in the emergency taskforce needs assessment, information and experience sharing through the clusters, and the coordination of humanitarian activities using 5W matrix to avoid the duplication of activities.

"There are regular meetings at Zonal level. NGOs working in the zone has presentation about the intervention they have, and intervention sites, challenges they face, and measures taken. The head of the coordination is zonal finance office and actively lead the coordination mechanism. Each actors take responsibilities based on the actions identified during the meetings and the actions are monitored."
NGO representative, Ethiopia²⁶

"There are six platforms at Zone level. [They are] active in those platforms."
- Government representative²⁷

²⁶ KII, Dorcas

²⁷ KII, Finance & Economic Development Office, Borena Zone

“They are transparent and share information regularly. They report project budget, activity, and target clearly. They submit project reports, and they share information on the humanitarian situation in the task force meeting.”

- Government representative²⁸

In addition, according to the CST Drought Response Plan (2022 – 24) at national level, CST actively participate in the National Cash Working Group, Food Security cluster, GBV sub-cluster and the Agricultural Task Force (ATF). CST also support partners and local level government to facilitate humanitarian need assessments, so the response is informed by up-to-date understanding of the needs.

How was project design influenced by sector working groups?

Given the active engagement with the zonal coordination mechanisms, and the requirement to have projects signed off by the government, we can infer the project design was influenced by sector working groups. However, this was a challenge as discussed above, for decision-making on the cash transfer amount.

“We are obligated to work in alignment with the standards and directions provided by those clusters. [For example], the cash amount is decided by cash working groups after [the] market assessment, then all NGOs required to follow when they distribute cash to vulnerable people.”

NGO representative, Ethiopia²⁹

As there was not standardisation across the projects of the cash transfer amount, CST did not strictly follow the guidance of the cash working group.³⁰ However, because of high inflation, adaptations did need to be made at both CST, partner, and cash working group level to cash transfer amounts and CST and partner staff recognised during the reflection and learning session that they need to advocate for more thorough standardisation of the MEB at the cash working group level, as well as advocate for a cash working group at the zonal level.

To what extent did the communication and collaboration between country offices and partners prove effective in facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the prevailing circumstances on the ground, timely response and in mobilising resources?

Unfortunately, key informant interviews (KIIs) with the senior management of CST partners were not conducted; however, there is evidence of effective communication and collaboration between CST and partners from the reflection and learning session which included representatives from the three partner organisations. Best practices highlighted included information sharing at all stages of

²⁸ KII, Finance & Economic Development Office, Borena Zone

²⁹ KII, Dorcas

³⁰ In the reflection and learning session, it was highlighted as that it was difficult to get the three different partners to agree on the same cash transfer amount.

the project management cycle, project kick-off meetings to ensure the project objectives are clear to all stakeholders, and technical trainings on cash transfer programming.

One reflection for the future highlighted during the reflection and learning session, was greater collaboration on resource mobilisation to respond to the gaps and to continue emergency response activities where needed.

Is the response providing vulnerable communities with life-saving and life-sustaining assistance in a timely manner?

Numerous sources of early warning information are being utilised by CST and partners, including traditional methods for forecasting and national/regional/global information from meteorological and livestock research bodies. However, this information could be better utilised for advocacy and resource mobilisation to increase attention to the crisis and access further funding.

A principled and participatory targeting approach is employed by CST and partners, ensuring that the most vulnerable are reached; and cross-cutting issues such as gender, age, disability, and the environment were given adequate consideration. The level of funding available means that vulnerability outweighs the resources.

How did the response utilise early warning information to make timely decisions to undertake early response?

CST and partners use both traditional methods for forecasting implemented by the communities they assist, as well as national information from the meteorological department, and global information from sources such as FEWS NET and the International Livestock Research Institute. The use of early warning information was seen as a strength, but there was an admission during the reflection and learning session that the consistent use of this information could be strengthened.

CST and partners felt that their response was timely and there was no evidence from the consultations with programme participants and affected communities to prove otherwise. However, there could have been a larger effort to use early warning information for mobilising resources and increasing fundraising activities, especially as the war in Ukraine had taken global attention away from other humanitarian crises. There were also multiple crises to fundraise for in Ethiopia, including the conflict in the north of the country. During the consultation with senior management at CST, regional fundraising efforts were mentioned with support from CAFOD HQ targeting UK-based donors which CST fed into with content such as case studies.

To what extent was assistance provided according to need and reached the most vulnerable, according to the principles of humanity and impartiality?

CST and partners highlighted as a strength the participatory targeting approach – combined with triangulation from secondary data sources- undertaken in the

drought response projects, and this was verified by the consultations with programme participants and affected communities.

“The supported provided was targeted and benefited the most vulnerable people, and the selection was conducted with community committee by moving house to house.”

- Programme participant, Ethiopia³¹

CST and partners consulted the community on the selection criteria, communicated selection criteria to communities, and created community level ‘targeting committees’ to assist in the identification of programme participants.

“[They] explained to us to target women and elders of male and female because they are the most vulnerable people in the community.”

- Programme participant, Ethiopia³²

“The selection was done in community meetings. The steps we have gone through targeting ensure that vulnerable people were supported.”

- Community leader, Ethiopia³³

Nonetheless, one challenge mentioned by senior management at CST was how to continue targeting the most vulnerable given the high number of needs; does CST continue to provide consistent and sustained support to the affected communities they already support – or support those who are not receiving any assistance?

To what extent were cross-cutting issues such as gender, age, disability, and the environment given adequate consideration in the response?

CST and partners also highlighted as a strength the inclusion of vulnerable groups (women, disabled and elderly) in the projects, and this was verified by consultations with programme participants and affected communities.

“Targeted persons included female headed households, families who lost all their animals, those who did not get support from other partners, families with many children, elderly, persons living with disability and orphans.”

- Programme participant, Ethiopia³⁴

³¹ FGD, Dasenech Woreda, South Omo Zone

³² KII, Dasenech Woreda, South Omo Zone

³³ KII, Teltele Woreda, Borena Zone

³⁴ KII, Moyale Woreda, Borena Zone

"[The organisation] and Kebele administration has provided awareness to the community on targeting. Special consideration was given for women, vulnerable people, and elders."

- Programme participant, Ethiopia³⁵

It has been observed that ensuring cash transfers are received by female members of the household reduces household level conflict, therefore this is being continued in future programming, as well as sensitisation/awareness on the purpose of multi-purpose cash with both male and female programme participants. House to house cash distribution is provided to the less mobile.

"The decision on utilising money was made jointly with both men and women. In most cases, women [have the] decision power as they are the leader of the family and aware of household needs."

- Programme participant, Ethiopia³⁶

Did the response have any unintended, positive, or negative effects on drought-affected people, local conflict dynamics, or national systems?

As mentioned above, the provision of multi-purpose cash had positive unintended consequence of supporting asset protection (livestock) and addressed different sectoral needs of the programme participants, including livelihoods, health, and education.

There was no evidence of negative unintended consequences, although during the reflection and lessons session, CST and partners briefly discussed needing to target a larger percentage of host community within projects to avoid potential conflict between host communities and IDPs. The only feedback provided by programme participants related to the high volume of needs versus the resources available.

"The people who need support was many but [they] only managed to support few from the needy."

- Programme participant, Ethiopia³⁷

To what extent are protection and accountability supporting design and implementation of the response?

There is good evidence of protection mainstreaming, and there has been existing investment in capacity strengthening on protection mainstreaming and accountability to affected populations (AAP) with partners. Nonetheless, the use of

³⁵ FGD, Dasenech Woreda, South Omo Zone

³⁶ FGD, Moyale Woreda, Borena Zone

³⁷ KII, Moyale Woreda, Borena Zone

regularly updated protection context analysis could be improved, as could regular protection mainstreaming monitoring.

There is clear evidence that affected communities are involved in project design, and feedback and complaint mechanisms (FCMs) are in place in each project location. Nonetheless, orientation on FCMs and documenting feedback and complaints needs improving.

How was protection context analysis incorporated into the response in each country?

CST senior management reported that protection is included in all needs assessments and highlighted that a protection context analysis was developed in Borena last August. However, during the reflection and learning session, CST and partner staff highlighted that they could improve upon conducting regular protection context assessments.

Is there evidence that partners' ensured protection mainstreaming and how was this monitored?

Protection mainstreaming had been rolled out with CST's partners with funding from other sources, which included a strong focus on AAP. Monitoring visit checklists include safeguarding, community FGDs include questions on FCMs, and post-distribution monitoring includes questions on partner conduct.

From the reflection and learning session it was highlighted that protection mainstreaming considerations were incorporated to ensure safe and accessible access to cash; for example, the contracting of a financial provider / bank to transfer cash, whilst also providing cash to the less mobile through house visits. Sensitisation / awareness raising on the purpose of multi-purpose cash and transferring cash to a female member of the household prevented conflict at the household level. Furthermore, as discussed above, vulnerable groups were identified through community consultation and selected as programme participants.

To what extent are programme participants engaged in the design of the response projects?

During the reflection and learning session, CST and partners highlighted the engagement of community committees in project design as a success. Community consultation on project design was verified by a large percentage of consulted programme participants and community leaders.

“[They] made discussion with community leaders and household representatives. They have identified the problems jointly with community and prioritised the issues to be addressed.”

- Programme participant, Ethiopia³⁸

³⁸ FGD, Moyale Woreda, Borena Zone

What evidence is there of programme participant feedback, including through complaints and feedback mechanisms, leading to project adaptations?

FCMs were established in each project location, including feedback and complaint committees; however, CST and partner staff agreed that orientation of the committees with the communities they serve needs to be improved. They also agreed that documenting feedback and complaints needs improving.

From the consultations with programme participants and affected communities, the majority reported that they knew how to provide feedback and complaints.

“Feedback and complaints committee was established and worked to manage issues during targeting and implementation.”

“We also know [their] office in Moyale and will provide feedback to them if we see any inappropriate actions by field level staff.”

- Programme participants, Ethiopia³⁹

Recommendations

Appropriateness

- Continue with multi-purpose cash as the major pillar of drought response but coordinate with partners and other humanitarian actors to standardise the minimum expenditure basket (MEB) and corresponding cash transfer amount.
- Consider integrated multi-sector response activities focusing on food security, livelihoods, and WASH, especially with new communities that are not benefiting from other CST programmes.
- Incorporate monthly market monitoring into multi-purpose cash projects to allow for timely project adaptations. Adaptations may include increasing cash transfer amounts or complementing cash transfers with direct distribution of high -priced food items or livestock / feed.
- Regularly conduct multi-sector needs assessments to complement the emergency taskforce needs assessment with more localised data and to ensure independent findings.

Connectedness

- The development or updating of the drought response strategy, and project design, should better articulate the links to longer-term programming based on overlaps in geographical priorities - and the former should include scenarios for moving into early recovery programming.

³⁹ FGD, Moyale Woreda, Borena Zone

Coordination

- Ensure partners are following the guidance of the cash cluster on MEB and cash transfer amounts unless the guidance provided is out-dated. If it is outdated, CST should bring partners together to agree on an evidence-based standard.
- CST and partners should work more closely on fundraising / resource mobilisation at local, national, regional, and global levels.

Effectiveness

- Continue to build upon the utilisation of early warning information and consistently link this to fundraising and advocacy efforts to mobilise resources for slow onset emergencies, dedicating resources to this and engaging HQ for support and connections to home or global donors.
- Continue the principled and participatory approach to targeting and programme participant selection.

Accountability and protection

- Ensure regular data collection and analysis of protection risks and improve protection mainstreaming monitoring.
- Strengthen the capacity of partners to document feedback and complaints.

Kenya

Country Overview

CAFOD has been supporting development and humanitarian aid projects in Kenya since 1962 and established a country office in Nairobi in 1998. There are thirteen staff, including an Emergency Response Surge team, based in Nairobi or globally, and two members of staff are based in the field and hosted by partners for stronger accompaniment.

CAFOD partners with 5 local civil society organisations in Kenya to deliver service-oriented interventions, structural change through advocacy, and to alleviate suffering and save the lives of people most in need.

At the time of review, three drought response projects have been funded in Kenya from CAFOD's World Food Crisis Fund and are either completed or have been extended with additional funding. The projects were implemented in Marsabit County, Isiolo County, and Samburu County in northern and eastern Kenya, although data collection for this review focused on Marsabit County and Isiolo County only. The projects were implemented in partnership with three partners – Caritas Marsabit, Caritas Isiolo, and Caritas Maralal, and the two main pillars of the projects were food security and the provision of water. Food security assistance is being provided either as multipurpose cash, food vouchers or direct food distribution based on market analysis findings. CAFOD has provided 823,672 GBP in funding to date (including complementary funding from Caritas Australia), reaching 62,622 direct programme participants. More information can be found in Annex C.

Findings

To what extent does the response meet local needs and adapt to changing needs at different phases of the crisis?

CAFOD and partners are implementing a multi-sector drought response, focusing mainly on the provision of food and water, which are the most appropriate forms of support in the Kenya context. Nonetheless, programme participants and affected communities did highlight the need for continued assistance, a preference for cash and voucher assistance (CVA), and additional support with livelihoods and/or income generating activities.

CAFOD and partners are utilising secondary data from IPC analysis and county government departments, complemented by meetings with affected communities to consult on their needs and priorities. There was not a consistent practice of conducting rapid needs assessments (RNAs) at the start of projects, which may have resulted in less precision with the assessment of needs, however this has been addressed in the second phase of projects which started in January 2023.

Which parts of the response have been the most appropriate and why?

There was strong verification through consultations with coordination mechanisms and other humanitarian actors that food security and water are the most appropriate interventions; and the household survey provided evidence of strong satisfaction by programme participants.⁴⁰

"CAFOD provided food and water – the two top priorities during the epitome of the drought period (July 2022 – January 2023). This was done through food aid, vouchers, food for fees, school feeding programme, water trucking and fuel support to 11 strategic boreholes."

- National Drought Management Authority representative (NDMA), Kenya⁴¹

"Food and water were the most useful support received as we had a lot of problems like lack of water and lack of food since we had lost all our livestock which was our only main source of livelihood. People were on the verge of dying of hunger and thirst and the support received from Caritas came in handy to alleviate the situation."

- Programme participant, Kenya⁴²

Other interventions highlighted by programme participants and affected communities included the provision of livestock feed and the school feeding programme.

"Livestock feed helped our few animals left at home to survive the drought and it also cushioned us from the exploitative nature of the market."

- Programme participant, Kenya⁴³

"The school feeding programme was very helpful where the food from the government was unreliable and this was able to elongate learning from afternoon to all day learning time."

- Programme participant, Kenya⁴⁴

From the household survey, programme participants most frequently highlighted CVA more than other interventions, given the choice and dignity it provides them.⁴⁵ In some locations, however, CAFOD and partners conducted direct food distribution rather than CVA based on market assessment findings.

⁴⁰ 73% of programme participants who took part in the household survey stated that they were very satisfied with the provided assistance.

⁴¹ KII, Marsabit County

⁴² FGD, Marsabit County

⁴³ FGD, Isiolo County

⁴⁴ FGD, Marsabit County

⁴⁵ What was the most useful support that Caritas provided you and your family? 38% of programme participants answered CVA, 27% food distribution, and 25% access to water.

"Cash transfer was the most useful intervention because it helped me and my family buy household food and also enabled me to afford at least 3 meals a day. It also helped me meet my other needs e.g., paying school fees."
- Programme participant, Kenya⁴⁶

One challenge highlighted by CAFOD, partners and the NDMA, is that the food assistance or CVA provided to programme participants in the projects conducted to date, did not meet the minimum expenditure basket (MEB) as a result of an increase in prices of basic commodities and fuel affected purchasing power.

Are there life-saving or life-sustaining needs that are not addressed by this response and why?

Feedback from programme participants and affected communities mostly highlighted the need for more of the same assistance, given the high needs and the limited resources available. However, livelihood support, particularly related to agriculture and livestock, was frequently raised.

"Poultry keeping and the provision of seeds for planting [is needed]."
- Community Leader, Kenya⁴⁷

In the household survey, some of programme participants who had received direct food distribution highlighted their preference for CVA.⁴⁸ CAFOD and partners, during the reflection and learning session, did highlight that CVA is more effective and efficient over direct food distribution as it involves less logistics and can stimulate the local markets. Nonetheless, although the preferred modality was CVA, market analysis and consultations with affected communities led to the different modalities in the different regions.

"We needed cash, and it wasn't provided."
- Programme participant, Kenya⁴⁹

Additional WASH assistance was also frequently highlighted by programme participants and affected communities; especially related to the maintenance and management of boreholes. A representative from Water and Environmental Sanitation Coordination mechanism (WESCOORD) interviewed for this review recommended "the possibility of [CAFOD and partners] upscaling WASH services

⁴⁶ FGD, Isiolo County

⁴⁷ KII, Isiolo County

⁴⁸ What support was not provided by Caritas that you felt was much needed by you and your family? 15% of programme participants answered CVA, 10% access to water, 5% livestock, and 2% food distribution.

⁴⁹ HH Survey, Marsabit County

during drought and building the resilience due to growing demand of water for multiple uses.”⁵⁰

How did the response adapt to meet the changing needs of the affected communities?

There was not a lot of evidence of project adaptation, but neither was there strong evidence to suggest it has been necessary given the short duration of the projects implemented thus far. Nonetheless, during the reflection and learning session, CAFOD partners highlighted how programme participants who were initially registered for direct food distribution in one village, migrated to another location due to impact of drought and the project team followed them to ensure they received their food assistance.

To what extent do the project designs reflect identified needs and priorities of affected communities, including those of vulnerable groups?

CAFOD and partners utilise secondary data from IPC analysis and county government departments, such as NDMA monthly reports and rapid needs assessments conducted by the Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG). This is complemented by meetings with affected communities to consult on their needs and priorities, and in Samburu County, the project was also informed by a needs assessment. For the second phase of the drought response projects in Isiolo and Marsabit counties, needs assessments have also now been conducted. During the reflection and learning session CAFOD and partners highlighted that using NDMA reports alone can lead to some areas being over targeted and that NDMA reports also do not include village level data, therefore needs assessments should be consistently conducted.

A high majority of programme participants⁵¹ confirmed that they were consulted about their needs and priorities during the household survey, as did consultations with programme participants and affected communities.

“Caritas staff visited the village and invited all community members for a consultation meeting where they presented their needs and priorities.”

- Programme participant, Kenya⁵²

Areas of interventions are particularly guided by the monthly NDMA bulletin for every county. This document is used by CSOs and NGOs/donors in identifying gaps and areas of intervention.

⁵⁰ KII, Director for Technology and Chairman, WESCOORD, Marsabit County

⁵¹ 91% of programme participants stated that Caritas consulted them before the project began to ask about their needs and priorities

⁵² FGD, Marsabit County

Is the response connected to resilience and longer-term programming?

It can be inferred from the consultations during the review that there are links between the drought response projects and CAFOD and partners' resilience and longer-term programmes, however, these links need to be better articulated in their drought response strategy and in project design processes. Although the drought response projects have a larger focus on addressing life-saving needs, there is clear evidence of resilience strengthening within the drought response projects, particularly related to boreholes, agroecology, and school feeding; and CAFOD is already looking at what is needed next - continued emergency response activities with agricultural and livestock support for food sustainability and livelihoods.

To what extent were adequate links to resilience and early recovery actors and interventions created?

There was not strong evidence from the review data of consistent links to resilience and early recovery interventions as there was a larger focus on other themes; however, from consultations with senior management and HQ at CAFOD it was emphasised that CAFOD and partners have a strong focus on longer-term programming in Kenya.

"Our current strategy is based on building resilience in communities – the emergency response activities were linked to this strategy. With the longer-term funding, we are already looking at what is next – livelihood activities, village associations, income generating activities, climate, resilience, and agriculture interventions to help the communities recover. Community capacity building interventions are also ongoing on climate change to improve environmental practices. We work very closely with the line ministries – water and irrigation, agriculture, and livestock also."
- CAFOD Senior Management, Kenya⁵³

Caritas Maralal did highlight that some of their drought response programme participants are part of their resilience and livelihoods, and that they also linked programme participants to other interventions such related to village saving and loan associations (VSLAs) and climate change.

As such, it can be inferred that there are links, however, these links need to be better articulated in the drought response strategy and in project design. And during the reflection and learning session, CAFOD and partners reflected that they could strengthen referrals to other actors and specialised actors, for example in nutrition.

Senior management at CAFOD also pointed out that there has been a challenge with linking the drought response projects with resilience and longer-term programming, given the high number of life-saving needs.

⁵³ KII, Country Representative - Kenya, Uganda, and Eritrea, CAFOD

"In Marsabit we have existing development programming – and we have to repurpose the long-term funds to be able to react to the context – when there was more need for life saving needs."

- CAFOD Senior Management, Kenya⁵⁴

Is there any evidence that the response is helping affected communities to better withstand future shocks, such as subsequent or future droughts?

Although the drought response projects had a larger focus on addressing live-saving needs, there was evidence of resilience strengthening within the projects, particularly related to boreholes, livestock feed, agroecology, and school feeding.

"Caritas Isiolo has helped the community greatly through provision of livestock feeds and cash transfer. It has helped us cope with the effects of drought. From the two interventions we are able to now take care of our families and nurture the livestock that survived from the drought."

- Programme participant, Kenya⁵⁵

Boreholes and water trucking to underground tanks provided more sustainable access to water. The drought response projects have helped repair boreholes that have broken down, supported the on-going functioning of boreholes, and CAFOD and partners stated that they coordinate with the county borehole rapid response team for timely response in case of borehole failures. Community participation and engagement in management of boreholes is also promoted.

"CAFOD drilled a borehole in Burgabo, supported 11 strategic boreholes with fuel subsidy and constructed an underground tank in Tulludimtu which was a clear link of emergency response, recovery, and long-term investments."

- National Drought Management Office representative, Kenya⁵⁶

Caritas Isiolo also highlighted that they included agroecology and kitchen gardens in one of the drought response projects, and in another area rehabilitated a borehole which was a more sustainable option and allowed livestock to drink as well. And the school feeding programme in Marsabit also resulted to high enrolment and retention, high performance as well as increased nutritional outcomes.

"Through the school feeding programme in Amalio primary school, many learners were retained in school, attracted new enrolment, and improved performance (supported longer learning hours and remedial classes)."

- Programme participant, Kenya⁵⁷

⁵⁴ KII, Country Representative - Kenya, Uganda, and Eritrea, CAFOD

⁵⁵ FGD, Isiolo County

⁵⁶ KII, Marsabit County

⁵⁷ FGD, Marsabit County

What is the community's perspective on the support they need to sustain change?

As mentioned above, CAFOD is already looking at what is needed next which aligns with the feedback provided by programme participants and affected communities; continued emergency assistance with agricultural and livestock support for food sustainability and livelihoods.

"[We] request restocking for those who lost everything... [we] don't have any livestock to sell to settle the school fees and children are being sent home."

- Programme participant, Kenya⁵⁸

"Food support should continue even with rains we don't eat grass and we don't have livestock to depend on hence request for restocking with shoats to begin afresh as a pastoralist."

- Programme participant, Kenya⁵⁹

To what extent has there been engagement with communities and local and national government on building resilience? For example, system strengthening to improve response and mitigation to the negative impact of future droughts?

There was not significant discussion of system strengthening during the reflection and learning workshop with CAFOD and partners but was highlighted at county and national government as a need by CAFOD senior management. Nonetheless, some evidence was highlighted during the consultations.

"NDMA, through the support of Caritas Marsabit, conducted DRR training targeted to 12 wards in October/November 2022 and helped communities develop DRR plans."

- National Drought Management Office representative, Kenya⁶⁰

How well coordinated is the response and with what consequences?

From the consultations with representatives from the government coordination mechanisms, as well as during the reflection and learning session with CAFOD and partner staff, strong evidence of coordination was provided with the County Steering Groups (CSGs), including the coordination of humanitarian activities using monthly project reporting tools and project approvals by CSGs to avoid the duplication of activities. Nonetheless, there are challenges with consistent engagement in CSG coordination by all humanitarian actors, resulting in bi-lateral coordination to ensure avoiding duplication. CAFOD and partners consult the technical working groups to ensure sector standards are followed but have challenges with ensuring the minimum expenditure basket (MEB) is met 100%.

⁵⁸ KII, Marsabit County

⁵⁹ FGD, Marsabit County

⁶⁰ KII, Marsabit County

CAFOD and partners highlighted the good flow of information between them, and the helpfulness of the technical support provided by CAFOD. One reflection for the future, is to ensure joint project kick-off meetings and plan more time for reflection and learning.

How have coordination mechanisms supported in providing coordinated and complementary assistance to those in greatest need? Is there any evidence that coordination helped to avoid duplications and to fill gaps?

The government department of National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) is directly responsible for coordinating emergency response initiatives nationwide. At the county level the CSGs work together with NDMA, county government departments and other civil society organisations to coordinate on targeting and response.

Caritas Isiolo, Caritas Maralal and Caritas Marsabit are members of their respective CSGs, and their drought response projects were presented to the CSGs which allocates geographical sites for implementation to ensure a coordinated and complementary response. The County Department and technical working groups such as Cash, WASH, Education, Livestock, Security etc. are also engaged during implementation for technical guidance; however, CAFOD and partners reflected during the reflection and learning session that in the future they want to ensure more consistent attendance by key technical staff and decision makers at the relevant coordination meetings.

An example of complementary assistance was provided during the reflection and learning session by Caritas Maralal who collaborated with NDMA to provide food assistance in the same wards NDMA was providing water trucking.

“Caritas actively participates in County Steering Group meetings that are convened bi-monthly and weekly during the height of the ravaging drought.”
- National Drought Management Office representative, Kenya⁶¹

According to senior management, at CAFOD level they engage with UNICEF and in the WASH cluster, providing WASH information to the partners and are exploring funding opportunities with UNICEF. CAFOD are also looking at collaboration with WFP and an assessment has already been done.

Coordination with other actors including County Governments and NDMA is minimising the duplication of efforts and is helping to ensure that the available resources reach the most vulnerable community members. However, not all humanitarian actors are attending CSG meetings and/or are not submitting the monthly interventions response matrix required by NDMA which can lead to

⁶¹ KII, Marsabit County

duplication. To overcome this challenge, CAFOD and partners highlighted that they are bi-laterally coordinating with other humanitarian actors to avoid duplication.

Beneficiary lists (disaggregated by wards and villages) are shared which enabled NDMA avoid chances of duplication of efforts. However, this level of disaggregated data was reported by 40% of the actors and there are cases of double reach by other actors during the drought period.
- National Drought Management Office representative, Kenya⁶²

How was project design influenced by sector working groups?

There was evidence of sector working groups influencing the design of the drought response projects, specifically market survey reports and the MEB. However, due to limited resources, CAFOD and partners only provided 75% of the MEB to enable them to reach more households. Even so, there were still evidence of programme participants sharing assistance. Direct food distribution did align with sector standards.

To what extent did the communication and collaboration between country offices and partners prove effective in facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the prevailing circumstances on the ground, timely response and in mobilising resources?

During the reflection and learning session, CAFOD and partners highlighted that there is a good flow of information between them, including the sharing of monthly situation reports by partners. CAFOD provides technical support during project design, baseline surveys, and post-distributing monitoring. One reflection for the future, is to ensure joint project kick-off meetings and plan more time for reflection and learning.

We get routine monitoring visits from the CAFOD team, and we were involved with a baseline assessment before the project started. When CAFOD visit, there is a lot of engagement and input from their staff. [And] joint needs analysis with CAFOD staff to ensure it is most appropriate."
- Partner Senior Management, Kenya⁶³

"CAFOD team have been on the ground, helped us with the assessment, and are there to support us. We have a contact person for all support. They have provided us with training on Kobo and they travel around the whole county, so they support a lot and enabled the project to be successful. Very supportive, like our neighbours and ready to travel as needed."
- Partner Senior Management, Kenya⁶⁴

⁶² KII, Marsabit County

⁶³ KII, Caritas Isiolo, Kenya

⁶⁴ KII, Caritas Maralal, Kenya

Senior management from CAFOD highlighted that partners are responsive with responding to questions, providing briefs, and advising where projects should be implemented; and that transparency is strong. Partners are also open to CAFOD bringing visitors for 'exposure' visits and monitoring visits.⁶⁵

We are very focused on the localisation agenda to ensure we have strong local capacity through our partners. We ensure institutional capacity strengthening and coordination.

- CAFOD Senior Management, Kenya⁶⁶

Is the response providing vulnerable communities with life-saving and life-sustaining assistance in a timely manner?

Numerous sources of early warning information are being utilised by CAFOD and partners, including FEWS NET, NDMA monthly drought bulletins, CSG presentations, and information from the Kenya Meteorological Department. However, this information has not equated to timely response because of challenges with fundraising.

A principled and participatory targeting approach is employed by CAFOD and partners to ensure the most vulnerable are reached; and cross-cutting issues are given adequate consideration. However, as mentioned previously, the level of funding available means that vulnerability outweighs the resources, and this is resulting in programme participants sharing assistance.

How did the response utilise early warning information and assessment reports to make timely decisions to undertake early response?

CAFOD and partner use a range of early warning information to inform the drought response, including FEWS NET, NDMA monthly drought bulletins, and CSG presentations. They highlighted that NDMA monthly bulletins are not the most accurate and, in the future, would like to incorporate local / traditional forecasting methods to compliment the other sources of information. CAFOD and partners also highlighted engagement with the Kenya Meteorological Department with branches at county level, who share information on the weather forecasts and can support with scenario planning; however, this support is not regular.

"We would like to develop early warning and emergency preparedness planning. To be able to use this for future shocks. And then we can pitch to other donors as well, local fundraising and early response."

- Partner Senior Management, Kenya⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Including UK MPs and representatives from the Bishops Conference

⁶⁶ KII, Country Representative - Kenya, Uganda, and Eritrea, CAFOD

⁶⁷ KII, Caritas Maralal, Kenya

Nonetheless, senior management at CAFOD level highlighted that there was a challenge between receiving timely information and being able to timely fundraise in order to respond. For example, an alert was raised to the Start Network in Spring 2022 but was not activated, and there was not an alternative fundraising plan in place. CAFOD HQ did not launch a specific appeal for Kenya or East Africa, but allocated funding from their World Food Crisis Fund in Summer 2022.

"We started getting alerts on the drought very early, from 2020/2021 from early warning information from NMDA and FEWSNET. But we were not able to act until 2022. The partners had the information – but we took a little longer, waiting until it hit in the UK media and be able to fundraise."

- CAFOD Senior Management, Kenya⁶⁸

To what extent was assistance provided according to need and reached the most vulnerable, according to the principles of humanity and impartiality?

The information provided by NDMA and IPC analysis is used by CAFOD and partners to identify broader areas of vulnerability, and this is complemented by engaging affected communities and creating 'community committees' to support with developing vulnerability criteria and targeting. They have also developed a 'distress call' system which community leaders use to provide information on vulnerable households from their community.

There was strong evidence from the household surveys and consultations with programme participants and affected communities that CAFOD and partners help the most vulnerable in the community regardless of ethnicity, religion, or political affiliation.⁶⁹

"The community did the selection amongst themselves based on the criteria that was agreed upon."

- Programme participant, Kenya⁷⁰

"The community identified the neediest households to be included in the project by evaluating vulnerability factors such as: the poor, elderly, pregnant and lactating women, people living with disability and household size."

- Programme participant, Kenya⁷¹

⁶⁸ KII, Country Representative - Kenya, Uganda, and Eritrea, CAFOD

⁶⁹ 100% of programme participants who participated in the household survey agree that CAFOD and partners help the most vulnerable in the community regardless of ethnicity, religion or political affiliation.

⁷⁰ FGD, Isiolo County

⁷¹ FGD, Marsabit County

Furthermore, a high majority of programme participants and affected communities confirmed that they were consulted or provided with information about the selection process for the project.⁷²

"They informed us that they were targeting the most vulnerable in the community, e.g., disabled, widows, widowers, child-headed households, sick, marginalised, pregnant and lactating, women with children under 5 years... and for the livestock feeds, households that that at least 3-5 shoats left behind among other criteria."
- Programme participant, Kenya⁷³

To what extent were cross-cutting issues such as gender, age, disability, and the environment given adequate consideration in the response?

During the reflection and learning session, CAFOD and partners highlighted evidence of the consideration of cross-cutting issues particularly related to gender and vulnerable groups with access challenges. For food assistance (both CVA and direct food distribution), they gave the example that priority and logistical support was provided to disabled persons, the elderly, the sick, and pregnant and lactating women; and highlighted how targeting had been guided by the frequent reports of women being left as a result of drought migration behind without assets or means to generate income.

Did the response have any unintended, positive, or negative effects on drought-affected people, local conflict dynamics, or national systems?

During the reflection and learning session, CAFOD and partners highlighted the high number of community members in dire need of humanitarian assistance due to subsequent rain failure in comparison to the available resources. This resulted in programme participants sharing assistance which, in turn, affected sector standards and project objectives. This corresponded with consultations with programme participants and affected communities.

"The food and water interventions came in handy, and we were able to share the food items and water with other community members migrating as well as those other family members who had moved to other locations in search pasture and water for their few remaining livestock."
- Community Leader, Kenya⁷⁴

Nonetheless, CAFOD and partners discussed the cultural aspect of sharing resources as a potential positive as in some cases it allowed them to reach more households.

⁷² 70% of programme participants who participated in the household survey stated that they were consulted or provided with information about the selection process for the project. 73% stated that they are satisfied with the selection process.

⁷³ FGD, Isiolo County

⁷⁴ KII, Marsabit County

For example, the livestock pellets benefitted more vulnerable households than intended due to 'culture sharing.'

CAFOD senior management stated that they have invested a lot in fundraising efforts, including hosting exposure visits; however, there has not been many successful funding applications. Given the challenge between the high levels of vulnerability and limited resources, the drought response strategy should include detail resource planning to support with the difficult programming decision-making process.

A positive unintended consequence highlighted by CAFOD and partners, was that the rehabilitation of the Burgabo borehole enabled the community members to start practising shade nets and kitchen gardening due to water availability.

To what extent are protection and accountability supporting design and implementation of the response?

There is evidence of the incorporation of gender mainstreaming, safe programming, and accountability to affected populations (AAP) in the drought response projects; however, from the reflection and learning session 'protection context analysis' and 'protection mainstreaming' as concepts are not fully understood. Nonetheless, CAFOD are continuously investing in their protection mainstreaming capacity strengthening.

AAP was a particular strength and well considered in the drought response projects, across all stages of the project management cycle; with strong evidence of affected communities' involvement in project design and orientation of affected communities on FCMs.

How was protection context analysis incorporated into the response in each country?

There was difficulty answering this question clearly, as there was not a strong understanding of what a protection context analysis is by CAFOD and partner staff; as such, during the reflection and learning session safeguarding, child protection, and code of conduct was discussed instead.⁷⁵

Nonetheless, CAFOD senior management explained that protection is critical to CAFOD's programmes, considered in needs assessments when conducted, and a gender and child lens is applied to their programmes.

⁷⁵ The reflection and learning session in Kenya was held in person and the consultant was not able to host or attend.

Is there evidence that partners' ensured protection mainstreaming and how was this monitored?

CAFOD have a Protection Mainstreaming Officer in Kenya who is engaged throughout the project management cycle, and there has been existing capacity strengthening on protection mainstreaming with partners. Partners work alongside the Protection Mainstreaming Officer during project design and proposal development, and partners are aware of the critical need to ensure protection is mainstreamed.

There was evidence of a good understanding of gender mainstreaming, safe programming, and the importance of accountability to affected populations and the inclusion of vulnerable groups. However, there was still not a consistent understanding of the concept of protection mainstreaming as a whole, with the concept being mixed with safeguarding and code of conduct. During the reflection and learning session, it was highlighted that protection mainstreaming was not sufficiently monitored.

To what extent are programme participants engaged in the design of the response projects?

The household survey and consultations with programme participants and affected communities provided strong evidence of programme participant engagement in the design of the drought response projects; mostly through community meetings where project details are discussed, and committees are formed to oversee project implementation.

"We have a detailed discussion on what their needs are, and we analyse this against other information. And weigh this up to make decisions. For example, the community asked for food distribution – we explained the cash mechanism instead and the advantages of cash versus distribution. We will discuss and make joint discussions."

- Partner Senior Management, Kenya⁷⁶

"The community actively participate in design of interventions as well as selection of the most vulnerable participants."

- Programme participant, Kenya⁷⁷

What evidence is there of programme participant feedback, including through complaints and feedback mechanisms, leading to project adaptations?

The household survey and consultations with programme participants and affected communities provided strong evidence of orientation on the multiple FCMs,

⁷⁶ KII, Caritas Isiolo, Kenya

⁷⁷ FGD, Marsabit County

including the feedback and complaint committees which were the mostly frequently mentioned FCM.⁷⁸

"During project design we meet with communities, and we explain the beneficiary feedback mechanism – and we will hold meetings to ensure we get the feedback. There are concerns to give feedback – that staff members will be fired, or services will be taken away. We have a desk with man and woman to be able to explain that this won't happen and take feedback."

- Partner Senior Management, Kenya⁷⁹

"[We can provide feedback] through the community committee, elders, and face to face engagement with Caritas staff."

- Programme participant, Kenya⁸⁰

CAFOD and partners highlighted the feedback and complaint process as a strength during the reflection and learning session, providing an example of how feedback and complaints are acted upon.

In Iyole Village [Marsabit County], the transporter who was contracted to transport food damaged some items. After the information reached the Caritas Office, the supplier replaced the damaged food items.

Recommendations

Appropriateness

- Incorporate regular market monitoring and analysis into project implementation to identify if any adaptations need to be made to cash and voucher transfer programming.
- Consistent practice of conducting rapid needs assessments (RNAs) or participating in joint needs assessments to complement findings from secondary data and community consultations and to allow for a greater precision in the identification of needs.

Connectedness

- Links between emergency response and longer-term programming should be better articulated in the drought response strategy and in project proposals to ensure, where possible, programme participants are benefiting from multiple interventions provided by CAFOD and partners

⁷⁸ 91% of programme participants who participated in the household survey stated that know where to complain or provide feedback.

⁷⁹ KII, Caritas Isiolo, Kenya

⁸⁰ FGD, Marsabit County

- Conduct mapping of referral pathways for other types of assistance, for both emergency and longer-term programming.
- Continue to provide emergency assistance but integrate agricultural and livestock support for food sustainability and livelihoods support.

Coordination

- Ensure consistent attendance in relevant coordination meetings by key technical staff and decision makers.
- Conduct joint project kick-off meetings with partners and plan more time for reflection and learning during the project cycle.

Effectiveness

- Continue to build upon the utilisation of early warning information and consistently link this to fundraising and advocacy efforts to mobilise resources for slow onset emergencies, dedicating resources to this work and engaging HQ for support and connections to home or global donors.
- Develop better informed and regularly updated emergency preparedness planning based on early warning information to ensure timely response and provide clearer guidance for resource mobilisation and structured resource planning.

Accountability and protection

- Ensure continued investment in capacity strengthening on protection mainstreaming to ensure that protection mainstreaming is adequately understood, implemented, and monitored.
- Continue with the implementation of multiple mechanisms to ensure accountability to affected populations.

Somalia

Country Overview

Trócaire has been supporting humanitarian service delivery in the Gedo region of Somalia since 1992, with offices in six out of the seven districts in the region (Beled Xawa, Burdhubo, Dollow, Elwaq, Garbaharey, and Luuq). The organization has 64 staff in the country programme, who implement projects both directly and through partners, and collaborate with local communities to deliver humanitarian interventions.

At the time of review, six drought response projects had been completed in Somalia across four districts in the Gedo region. The projects were implemented directly by Trócaire or through two partner organisations - Active in Development Aid (ADA) and Somali Humanitarian Relief Action (SHRA). The projects all differed in sectoral focus, covering one or two of the following sectors: food security, nutrition, WASH, and protection. Funding was provided by Trócaire's special appeal mechanism amounting to 605,000 EUR, reaching 65,214 direct programme participants. More information can be found in Annex C.

Findings

To what extent does the response meet local needs and adapt to changing needs at different phases of the crisis?

Through the triangulation of data sources, including rapid needs assessments (RNAs), community engagement, and secondary data sources, the drought response projects in Somalia satisfactorily reflect the identified needs and priorities of affected communities. Unfortunately, the needs are vast, covering multiple sectors and high numbers of vulnerable people, which goes beyond the resources available to the Trócaire and partners.

The assistance provided is highly appreciated and appropriate to the crisis, especially food assistance, WASH and NFIs, but many gaps were raised by affected communities during the review process, particularly related to cash assistance, livelihoods, and WASH. Given the high level of needs and the resources available, it would be hard for Trócaire and partners to be able to provide comprehensive support as needed, and they are acting prudently with the limited resources they have. Nonetheless, greater precision with identifying gaps and prioritising life-saving needs could be supported with stronger resource planning.

Which parts of the response have been the most appropriate and why?

Trócaire and partners took a multi-sector approach with the drought response projects and from the consultations with programme participants and affected communities it is clear that all the assistance provided was highly appreciated. Nonetheless, food distribution, WASH (water trucking, shallow well and latrine

construction, and hygiene kits), and NFI distributions were most frequently highlighted during the consultations.

"The food distribution was among the most useful support SHRA extended to us because food and water are fundamental for our lives... there is no life without food and water."

- Community Leader, Somalia⁸¹

"Provision of water during times of drought, which had a significant impact on the community. It was lifesaving for both humans and livestock."

- Programme Participant, Somalia⁸²

"When I arrived in this camp, I come with nothing other than children... after I received NFI kit my life has changed."

- Programme Participant, Somalia⁸³

Food assistance was highlighted most frequently, and this was verified as the most appropriate response by the representative from the CCCM cluster interviewed.⁸⁴ However, there were references to the short duration of the food assistance provided which Trócaire and partners reflected on during their reflection and learning session, agreeing that the assistance was not sufficient and that resources were constrained to enable the provision of more.

"Support was only for one month, no long-term assistance."

- Programme Participant, Somalia⁸⁵

Nutrition support was also vital, as per the IPC levels in the Gedo region, however this was not highlighted as much by programme participants. Nonetheless, it was raised before data collection started that given the migratory patterns of affected communities, it would be challenging to speak to many of the programme participants, therefore we can infer that the pool of programme participants interviewed was not as representative as it could have been.

⁸¹ KII, Luuq District, Gedo Region

⁸² KII, El Wak District, Gedo Region

⁸³ FGD, Dollow District, Gedo Region

⁸⁴ IOM/CCCM, Dollow District, Gedo Region

⁸⁵ KII, Luuq District, Gedo Region

Numerous malnourished children and pregnant and lactating women were saved thanks to the nutrition services provided by Trócaire and its implementation partner ADA. For GBV victims and survivors, Trócaire and its partner distribute dignity kits. All these supports were vital and needed."

- Programme Participant, Somalia⁸⁶

Are there life-saving or life-sustaining needs that are not addressed by this response and why?

This question was especially challenging to answer in Somalia, as all sectors were mentioned by programme participants and affected communities consulted, and it was frequently highlighted that they understood the needs were too high for the humanitarian community to address given the current levels of funding.

"Humanitarian actors in the district are doing well when it comes to helping the affected and vulnerable community though the number of those affected by the [different] shocks and the scope of the assistance are not corresponding [with available resources], particularly the last years humanitarian assistances had dropped drastically. Humanitarian actors otherwise are doing well to help people to cope with shocks."

- Government representative, Somalia⁸⁷

Cash transfer programming, WASH and livelihoods were the most frequently referred to gaps. WASH was frequently mentioned by programme participants and affected communities in Dollow where Trócaire had directly implemented projects mostly related to nutrition, protection, and NFI distribution (although NFIs had included hygiene items). However, in other districts in the Gedo region where Trócaire and partners had implemented WASH activities, the feedback was positive.

"One of the most important services ADA offered to our community was WASH intervention, including the installation of pit temporary latrines, sanitation, and hygiene programmes, and shallow well rehabilitation."

- Programme Participant, Somalia⁸⁸

Trócaire have provided communities with cash transfers previously; however, it was not clear why the drought response projects did not include cash transfer programming (CTP) as this was something the affected communities highlighted as a need during consultations for this review.

⁸⁶ FGD, El Wak District, Gedo Region

⁸⁷ KII, Luuq Local Authority Office

⁸⁸ FGD, El Wak District, Gedo Region

"Cash transfer and relief food support are the most useful thing that we have ever felt Trócaire provided with us. Cash intervention will reduce food crisis."

- Programme Participant, Somalia⁸⁹

The inclusion of CTP could have also helped to protect livelihoods or other forms of income generation. However, given the high level of needs and the resources available, it would have been hard for Trócaire and partners to be able to provide such comprehensive support, covering all the needs identified and raised by affected communities.

"Other support needed was cash assistance to support recovery for those who lost farms and other livelihoods, but this was not supported by Trócaire, and any assistance given by other actors was not adequate to reach all the vulnerable."

- District Health Board representative, Somalia⁹⁰

How did the response adapt to meet the changing needs of the affected communities?

In Somalia, both drought and conflict has led to a major displacement crisis, and this was taken into consideration by Trócaire and partners with the inclusion of NFIs distributions which, as mentioned above, was highly appreciated.

"The utensils were the most useful thing in my family, the reason as to why they most useful was I came from a far distance, and I didn't had utensils to serve food to my children."

- Programme Participant, Somalia⁹¹

Another need raised as a gap given displacement was shelter support, although tarpaulin had been included with the NFI distributions, it was still highlighted as a gap.

"During the drought response, shelter and NFI needs was the most poorly addressed due to few partners responding to shelter and NFI as well as donors not being interested in funding shelter and NFI response."

- CCCM Cluster, Somalia⁹²

"[Some] had no place to live... and were living in the open. This is still the case now for some families, it's raining, and shelter is paramount."

- Community Leader, Somalia⁹³

⁸⁹ KII, Dollow District, Gedo Region

⁹⁰ KII, Luuq, Gedo Region

⁹¹ KII, Dollow District, Gedo Region

⁹² IOM/CCCM, Dollow District, Gedo Region

⁹³ KII, Luuq District, Gedo Region

Again, it would have been hard for Trócaire and partners to be able to provide such comprehensive multi-sector support without covering less affected communities. Given the continued deterioration of the situation, continuous engagement with affected communities and other humanitarian actors throughout implementation could assist with project adaptations which appeared limited in the drought response projects. This is likely to be a result of the short project durations of the drought response projects.

To what extent do the project designs reflect identified needs and priorities of affected communities, including those of vulnerable groups?

Trócaire and partners conducted RNAs and triangulated findings with other secondary data sources, including IPC analysis and UN OCHA prioritisation mapping; and consulted with affected communities (through community inception meetings and outreach activities), local authorities, and other humanitarian actors. Funding went to a mix of communities, including those from other Trócaire projects, but also to new areas of operations based on vulnerability.

"Projects are funded on a needs-based approach. Gaps are identified and priorities established through organisational level needs assessments to assess the impact of drought... We try to respond to the most vulnerable in the targeted location (coverage area of the project) and not only our specific targeted beneficiaries. In partnership with Trócaire, decision was solely made as per the priority humanitarian needs in El Wak primarily targeting the most vulnerable members in the community including IDPs and host communities affected by the drought. ADA's presence and knowledge of the local context was also considered in allocating the special appeal funds to this area. The supported communities included new communities who were affected by the prolonged drought."

- Partner representative, Somalia⁹⁴

"During the response there was a pre- assessment that IOM conducted with Trócaire, and this formed the basis of the response, to meet the needs of the most vulnerable. I believe that their implementation was appropriate and based on an assessment that spoke to the needs of the community."

- CCCM Cluster, Somalia⁹⁵

There was clear indication from programme participants and affected communities that Trócaire and partners had consulted them on their needs.

" Trócaire consulted us by organising consultative committees that are composed of the different aspects of the community, and they asked us to state our priority

⁹⁴ KII, Director, ADA

⁹⁵ IOM/CCCM, Dollow District, Gedo Region

needs, the needs on the ground are still wanting but the kits that we have received came at a period in which we required most."

- Community Leader, Somalia⁹⁶

Is the response connected to resilience and longer-term programming?

Although links to resilience or longer-term programming could be better articulated in the drought response strategy and project designs – resulting in clearer and more intentional linkages; Trócaire and partners are integrating a degree of resilience into the drought response projects. It was clear from the feedback from programme participants and affected communities that their needs remain focused on emergency relief, implying that it is too early in the crisis in Somalia to consider implementing standalone resilience or early recovery programmes; nonetheless, resilience should continue to be integrated as per the needs identified.

Nonetheless, Trócaire continues to have strong focus on system strengthening at community and local government levels, despite the inherent challenges, particularly through their support to the District Health Boards.

To what extent were adequate links to resilience and early recovery actors and interventions created?

During the reflection and learning session, Trócaire and partners felt that building community resilience was not adequately addressed in the drought response projects. However, from the consultations with senior management and the CCCM cluster, links to resilience interventions were highlighted, especially in locations where other longer-term projects were already being implemented. This could be a result of programme staff not having the same awareness of the 'larger' portfolio of projects and could perhaps be better articulated in the drought response strategy and in the design of projects.

"We were not looking at the special appeals funding as siloed projects; we were looking at the lives of the people we support holistically. In most areas we had projects already... for example, women enrolled in our resilience and nutrition projects. When they were engaged with the special appeal projects, we considered food support to those women who couldn't collect their harvest, so they didn't abandon their farms... [There was] joint planning, information sharing between different projects."

- Senior Management Representative, Trócaire ⁹⁷

⁹⁶ KII, Dollow District, Gedo Region

⁹⁷ Humanitarian Programme Manager, Trócaire, Somalia

"Coordination among actors [including Trócaire] led to targeting vulnerable groups and linking them to sustainable interventions by other actors to receive resilience activities such as livelihood activities."

- CCCM Cluster, Somalia⁹⁸

"Through referrals, we have been able to support our beneficiaries link with our own internal programs. For example, linking a beneficiary with a protection problem to a livelihood program and vice versa. The project has substantially supported the vulnerable community members affected by the drought in which these supported community members develop and practice coping strategies that supports them during the drought season."

- Partner representative, Somalia⁹⁹

Furthermore, feedback from programme participants and affected communities on the protection and WASH interventions highlighted that their resilience was strengthened.

"Trócaire and partners implemented a community focused GBV programme [that] strengthened the resilience of the community members and responded to GBV violations through provision of psychosocial support and health referrals to the survivors of GBV."

- Programme Participant, Somalia¹⁰⁰

"Rehabilitation of shallow well construction of latrines and distribution of hygiene kit contributed to us coping well during the drought."

- Programme Participant, Somalia¹⁰¹

What is the community's perspective on the support they need to sustain change?

Despite the above, there were many references from programme participants and affected communities of the need for further support to increase their resilience, particularly in reference to livelihoods.

"The humanitarian actors support you with food to protect challenges ahead of you... [but] we need long-term investment to cope better."

- Programme Participant, Somalia¹⁰²

⁹⁸ IOM/CCCM, Dollow District, Gedo Region

⁹⁹ KII, Director, ADA

¹⁰⁰ KII, El Wak District, Gedo Region

¹⁰¹ KII, El Wak District, Gedo Region

¹⁰² KII, Luuq District, Gedo Region

"Now that they helped us at the time, we are also asking assistance like wealth creation assistance e.g., livestock restocking and farm inputs since it has rained and there will be no drought this time."

- Programme Participant, Somalia¹⁰³

Early recovery activities were not raised during the review by any stakeholders, pointing to it being too early in the crisis; however, as mentioned above, references were made for the need to continue humanitarian activities.

"Before intervention, SHRA assessed our priorities needs and support was based on that. However, the support was just a one-off and not continued after that."

- Community Leader, Somalia¹⁰⁴

To what extent has there been engagement with communities and local and national government on building resilience? For example, system strengthening to improve response and mitigation to the negative impact of future droughts?

Trócaire actively engage, and capacity strengthen, local authorities on drought mitigation, including training and sharing early warning information. Trócaire also conducts community-based nutrition surveillance and advocate community-based solutions to mitigate against the negative impacts of drought. Nonetheless, it was highlighted by Trócaire and partners that there is limited government capacity. However, the long history of the support provided by the Trócaire Country Office in Somalia into the District Health Boards demonstrates a significant contribution to system strengthening at both community and government levels.

"The District Health Board committee has 13 members and is the link between the community and Trócaire. The District Health Board therefore link Trócaire to other community structures as well including different community groups, women groups, youth groups etc., to discuss coping mechanisms. The District Health Board informs Trócaire on the emerging needs of the community in general even those outside the scope of the project i.e., water tracking, establishment of new health centres that the community say would make their lives better. The community is diverse and therefore have many ways to increase their coping mechanism. The project was short term and had no long-term impact, but the affected population did benefit from other projects through link to other interventions like water systems, health and nutrition."

- District Health Board representative, Somalia¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ FGD, Luuq District, Gedo Region

¹⁰⁴ KII, Luuq District, Gedo Region

¹⁰⁵ KII, Luuq, Gedo Region

How well coordinated is the response and with what consequences?

Trócaire and partners are strong in coordination, including engagement in (and leading) regional mechanisms and sub-clusters, sharing information and experience through the clusters, and coordinating humanitarian activities using 5W matrix to avoid the duplication of activities. Project design is influenced by clusters; however, the vast needs outweighing the available resources continues to challenge all humanitarian actors being able to ensure standardised assistance which meet Sphere Standards.

How have coordination mechanisms supported in providing coordinated and complementary assistance to those in greatest need? Is there any evidence that coordination helped to avoid duplications and to fill gaps?

Trócaire actively participates in national coordination mechanisms, including the health, nutrition, protection, and WASH clusters. They also actively participate in Area Humanitarian Coordination Group meetings, with a leadership role in Luuq. According to the Trócaire Somali Emergency Response strategy for 2022, Trócaire coordinates beneficiary selection and verification with the clusters and key nutrition actors such as WFP and UNICEF, INGOs (such as World Vision), and local NGOs providing nutrition and food security assistance. The clusters identify the various sites with the most vulnerable recipients and assigns these sites to the involved agencies to prevent duplication of services. Trócaire actively shares all planned surveys and assessments with the clusters in order to reduce duplication and contributes to response planning, resource mobilisation, and the establishment of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). Trócaire shares information about its plans and activities by sending a monthly report using the 5W matrix to the relevant clusters.

During the reflection and learning session, Trócaire and partners felt that coordination is a strength, although highlighted that coordination could be strengthened to ensure continuous engagement throughout the project management cycle. It was also apparent through the consultations with partner senior management, that coordination was a priority to ensure coordinated and complementary assistance. One success highlighted is ADA's role as co-chair of the GBV sub-cluster, which requires continued resources to ensure this position is retained.

"We [attend] WASH cluster and food security cluster where each organisation shares what their plans are and activities, they meet monthly and this helps to reduce duplication or double targeting. In addition, when we target a particular area with WASH activities, the other organisations can target the same area with different services like NFI so that the beneficiaries are able to receive quality assistance with different services that they need."

- Partner representative, Somalia¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ KII, Programme Manager, SHRA

"[We] attend protection coordination meetings. We have also conducted mapping so as to be able to make proper referrals for our beneficiaries especially for those services ADA does not offer. It is important to have an updated mapping chart to know who is doing what and where and to make timely referrals, so when our beneficiaries need a certain service that we do not provide, we are able to know where to send them due to the mapping we have done."

- Partner representative, Somalia¹⁰⁷

Building upon the above, the consultation with the CCCM cluster, further demonstrated Trócaire's commitment to coordination to avoid duplication and fill gaps.

"Trócaire approached the CCCM cluster to assist them in targeting the most vulnerable population out of a large group of vulnerable people, together with the local authority and the camp management teams... when Trócaire was distributing food to the IDPs, they made sure that they had presented themselves to the food security cluster chaired by WFP to make them aware of the distribution so that if there was another organisation having the same activity, they could then distribute in a different location."

- CCCM Cluster, Somalia¹⁰⁸

How was project design influenced by sector working groups?

There was no specific reference in the data collected for this review to demonstrate project design was strongly influenced by the clusters, apart from the proven engagement of Trócaire and partners in cluster mechanisms. Nonetheless, when the representative from the CCCM cluster was asked if Trócaire aligned their activities to sector standards to ensure programme participants are receiving the same support, they answered by highlighting the challenges in achieving this as a result of the funding situation, providing more clarity on why Trócaire were in some cases only able to provide food assistance for one month.

"In Somalia achieving standards is hard because if you compare the little funds we have against the population that are living in the IDP sites, it's quite difficult. For example, the WASH standards states that 1 tap should be used 250 people, but here we have 800 people using one tap. This standard therefore has not been met. But people are doing their best. On the other hand, you can find latrines the standards are met. So that is the situation. Some standards are met while others are not, but it is because of funds and the huge needs."

- CCCM Cluster, Somalia¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ KII, Director, ADA

¹⁰⁸ IOM/CCCM, Dollow District, Gedo Region

¹⁰⁹ IOM/CCCM, Dollow District, Gedo Region

To what extent did the communication and collaboration between country offices and partners prove effective in facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the prevailing circumstances on the ground, timely response and in mobilising resources?

Unfortunately, during the reflection and learning session there was not enough time to dive into this question enough as priority focus had been given to other questions. Nonetheless, Trócaire and partners did agree that there is strong collaboration and information sharing in the partnerships; and senior management at Trócaire emphasised that Trócaire and partners jointly assess the needs of the community and design projects together. This was echoed by the consultations with partner senior management who feel they can connect with Trócaire easily and rely on their support.

"There was consultation with Trócaire during proposal development who guided and supported ADA. Capacity strengthening was also provided. Trocaire has also been sharing with us the relevant information such as links to learning materials, proposal developments guidance, capacity strengthening from other donors. Overall field support [was] also provided by Trócaire, once you make a phone call they respond promptly and guide us, there is that one on one support given. They provide advice suitable for the issue raised."

- Partner representative, Somalia¹¹⁰

Is the response providing vulnerable communities with life-saving and life-sustaining assistance in a timely manner?

Trócaire and partners are providing life-saving and life-sustaining assistance in a timely manner, clearly reaching the most vulnerable; however, Trócaire and partners reflected that contingency planning, including scenarios and programme-level preparedness, for the impacts of drought could better enable timely response driven by early warning information. Nonetheless, the Trócaire nutrition surveillance monitoring conducted on a quarterly basis is boosting the availability of timely information on vulnerability levels but, as with the other countries, the level of funding available means that vulnerability outweighs the resources.

How did the response utilise early warning information to make timely decisions to undertake early response?

There is evidence from Trócaire that early warning information is assessed and utilised; including the use of data from Somalia Water and Land Information Management (SWALIM), FEWS NET, and Trócaire's own nutrition surveillance monitoring conducted on a quarterly basis. However, during the reflection and learning session Trócaire and partners highlighted that contingency planning for the drought response could be strengthened and better informed /acted upon through more strategic use of early warning information.

¹¹⁰ KII, Director, ADA

To what extent was assistance provided according to need and reached the most vulnerable, according to the principles of humanity and impartiality?

As mentioned above, a participatory / community-based approaches are taken to identify the most vulnerable; triangulated with RNAs and other secondary data. Unfortunately, reaching the most vulnerable still remains a challenge given the high levels of need and vulnerability within the communities targeted.

"Before any implementation we do an assessment and so we can know the most vulnerable members of the community. The community is also engaged to validate this assessment before continuing to develop the proposal. There is also continuous dialogue with the community a minimum of three that take place before the project, in the middle and at the end of the project, to ascertain that the targeted people were the most vulnerable. The government representatives, women groups, also do form part of the selection criteria and other relevant stakeholders such as local authority. For example, the project beneficiaries were selected according to set criteria particularly targeting the most vulnerable members in the community affected by the drought."

- Partner representative, Somalia¹¹¹

Furthermore, there was consistent evidence that affected communities are engaged to ensure that they understand the activities to be implemented and who will receive assistance and why.

"SHRA have a meeting with the communities to explain the intervention in detail, followed by beneficiary selection under stated criteria and procedure that have been explained, then the community selected the right beneficiary for the intervention, validated and verified at community level."

- Programme Participant, Somalia¹¹²

One observation raised during the reflection and learning session, was that Trócaire and partners should increase the percentage of the host community targeted by the drought response projects, perhaps to 10%. There is a perception that the displaced persons are the most vulnerable, but this is not always true and there is a nuance to be understood between the distinct needs of the two communities.

To what extent were cross-cutting issues such as gender, age, disability, and the environment given adequate consideration in the response?

There were no concerns raised by programme participants and the affected community on targeting criteria and reaching the most vulnerable. However, there was not adequate data or dialogue during the reflection and learning session to definitively answer this question.

¹¹¹ KII, Director, ADA

¹¹² KII, Luuq District, Gedo Region

"They help most needy individuals in the community. Mostly they targeted vulnerable households like the new IDP arrivals who did not receive any support, female headed households, child headed households, marginalize households and people with disability."

- Programme Participant, Somalia¹¹³

Nonetheless, the activities conducted in the nutrition and protection programmes – including the distribution of dignity kits – demonstrates gender and age were significantly considered. During the reflection and learning session there was a brief discussion on how there is continuous learning taking place on how cultural norms affect protection programming – particularly around issues of GBV and FGM. As discussed further below, some of the drought response projects used protection mainstreaming sector checklists which is something Trócaire is keen to continue and extend across all sectors – rather than just WASH.

Did the response have any unintended, positive, or negative effects on drought-affected people, local conflict dynamics, or national systems?

The only unintended consequence noted during the review, given the large volume of needs versus resources, was the consequences of being unable to reach all the highly vulnerable individuals within an affected community; sometimes resulting in the sharing of assistance or selling distribution items. It could be recommended that cash transfer programming might have been, therefore, more appropriate; however, this review is not in-depth enough to make that recommendation on this factor alone.

"There is considerable peer pressure during [dignity kit] distribution because it is pricey in the market and every lady wants... individuals ask to share with you the dignity kits provided since it was only provided to the GBV survivors."

- Programme Participants, Somalia¹¹⁴

"Some people sold some items in NFI kit because they needed which was good in my opinion."

- Programme Participant, Somalia¹¹⁵

"Some people wanted to get assistance multiple times during the distribution day... even some people came from other camps to ours to get assistance."

- Programme Participants, Somalia¹¹⁶

¹¹³ KII, Dollow District, Gedo Region

¹¹⁴ FGD, El Wak District, Gedo Region

¹¹⁵ KII, Dollow District, Gedo Region

¹¹⁶ FGD, Dollow District, Gedo Region

To what extent are protection and accountability supporting design and implementation of the response?

There is clear evidence of protection mainstreaming in the drought response projects, and there is existing investment by Trócaire in capacity strengthening on protection mainstreaming with programme teams and partners in Somalia. Nonetheless, the country protection context analysis should be updated more regularly and there could be improvements made to protection mainstreaming monitoring.

Programme participants and affected communities provided positive feedback on accountability, consistently highlighting their involvement in project design and targeting, and their understanding of the feedback and complaint mechanisms (FCMs) available to them.

How was protection context analysis incorporated into the response in each country?

There was not specific data from the review to clearly answer this question and senior management from the Trócaire Country Office in Somalia acknowledged that an updated protection context analysis would be beneficial. Nonetheless, there is strong engagement by Trócaire and their protection partners in the protection cluster / sub-clusters where much information on the protection context is provided and utilised. Similarly, Trócaire has a robust protection team supporting programme teams and partners in Somalia. As such, there were no concerns about the incorporation of protection mainstreaming highlighted in this review.

Is there evidence that partners' ensured protection mainstreaming and how was this monitored?

Trócaire provides training and technical backstopping on protection mainstreaming, with regular engagement with partners and affected communities, including spot checks of project sites. During the reflection and learning session, Trócaire and partners were happy with the levels of community engagement to ensure accountability to affected populations (AAP), including the use of FCMs, and highlighted the use of a protection mainstreaming checklist for WASH projects. However, they also highlighted that further training on protection mainstreaming is needed, protection mainstreaming monitoring needs to be improved (e.g., protection mainstreaming action plans to measure the impact or progress and improve referral pathways), and that there should be systematic use of protection mainstreaming sector checklists when designing and implementing projects.

To what extent are programme participants engaged in the design of the response projects?

There was strong evidence from the consultations with affected communities that they are engaged in the design of projects.

"They involve local leaders during designing and implementation of the project activities. They had consultations with some members of the community including camp leaders and elders."

- Programme Participant, Somalia¹¹⁷

"[They] frequently includes community members in the design of the support they offer and conducts extensive research."

- Programme Participant, Somalia¹¹⁸

What evidence is there of programme participant feedback, including through complaints and feedback mechanisms, leading to project adaptations?

Trócaire and partners are ensuring multiple mechanisms are provided in each project for feedback and complaints from affected communities, and there was strong evidence from the consultations with programme participants and affected communities that these mechanisms are well-known.

"I know several ways to feedback... but I prefer hotline because less effort and easy accessibility."

- Programme Participant, Somalia¹¹⁹

"I heard about a number used to call them, but I don't know it. I can also directly talk to their staff who work in them. During the distribution their staff were receiving complaints and addressing them."

- Programme Participant, Somalia¹²⁰

"I am aware of a toll-free line that I can call direct without consuming my airtime, and as well we can reach the office to take our complains and receive feedback later and sometimes we communicate in person to staff directly. I prefer hot line which are easier and free."

- Programme Participant, Somalia¹²¹

Nonetheless, during the reflection and learning session, Trócaire and partners agreed that there needs to be improvements in ensuring appropriate mechanisms for handling sensitive complaints, and whilst the use of non-formal methods for obtaining feedback are yielding engagement, there is a need to systematise and ensure clear recording for informal feedback. There was also no data provided for the review to demonstrate FCMs leading to project adaptations.

¹¹⁷ KII, Dollow District, Gedo Region

¹¹⁸ KII, El Wak District, Gedo Region

¹¹⁹ KII, El Wak District, Gedo Region

¹²⁰ KII, Dollow District, Gedo Region

¹²¹ KII, Luuq District, Gedo Region

Recommendations

Appropriateness

- Continue conducting rapid needs assessments (RNAs) prior to project implementation and engaging with affected communities during the identification of needs.
- Ensure greater precision in identifying gaps and prioritising lifesaving needs through continuous engagement with affected communities and other humanitarian actors throughout implementation to adapt projects if needed.
- Emergency preparedness planning and updating the drought response strategy should have a greater emphasis on resource planning to identify gaps with greater precision that Trócaire and partners are best placed to respond to, and to provide a holistic packages of multi-sector support to the same programme participants.
- Cash transfer programming should be considered where possible to support livelihoods and household resilience and may address many of the multi-sector gaps highlighted by affected communities.

Connectedness

- Drought response strategy processes, and project proposals, should better articulate the links between the drought response projects to longer-term programming based on overlaps in geographical priorities and the strong engagement with the District Health Boards to ensure resilience is being effectively incorporated into the drought response.

Coordination

- Continuous engagement with coordination mechanisms throughout the project management cycle, particularly during implementation, to ensure continued oversight of the greatest needs and gaps.
- Continue support to ADA in their role as co-chair of the GBV sub-cluster.

Effectiveness

- Develop contingency plans for the drought response based on early warning information to ensure timely response and provide clearer guidance for resource mobilisation and structured resource planning.

Accountability and protection

- Continued investment and strengthening of protection mainstreaming through training, developing protection mainstreaming action plans, and the systematic use of protection mainstreaming sector checklists when designing and implementing projects.
- Ensure informal feedback and complaints are documented and acted upon and consider putting additional emphasis on the most appropriate feedback and complaint mechanisms (FCMs) for sensitive complaints when orientating programme participants.

South Sudan

Country Overview

CAFOD & Trócaire in Partnership (CTP) is a merged entity of CAFOD and Trócaire, managing joint programmes since 2015 with an office in Juba, South Sudan and 16 staff.

At the time of the review, CTP are implementing five drought response projects in Malakal County, Upper Nile State and Tonj North County, Warrap state in South Sudan; in partnership with 4 partners.¹²² These projects were all multi-sector projects, covering three or more sectors from the following: agriculture, food security, livelihoods, WASH, NFIs, protection, and peace-building. Funding was provided by CAFOD (423,568 GBP) and Trócaire's (316,000 EUR) through their respective appeal mechanisms, in addition to complementary funding from Caritas Australia (200,000 AUD) and the Passionists (50,000 GBP). The total expected reach is 43,937 direct programme participants. More information can be found in Annex C.

Unfortunately, given the security situation in country, data collection was focused on the largest multi-sector project implemented in Tonj North County in partnership with Hope Agency for Relief and Development (HARD) and The Organization for Children's Harmony (TOCH) which had ended by the time of the review. The distribution of crop seeds (sorghum, groundnuts, and cowpea), vegetable seeds, and hand tools was the main pillar of this 'church appeal' project, complimented with other multi-sector support (food assistance, WASH, NFIs, resilience, and protection) to people affected by multiple shocks, including conflict-related violence and flooding, in addition to drought.

Findings

To what extent does the response meet local needs and adapt to changing needs at different phases of the crisis?

The multi-sector support provided by the church appeal project in South Sudan is appropriate because it is increasing food production and income generation capacity and is much appreciated by the affected communities. Nonetheless, there have been some challenges with timely implementation of components of the project, and programme participants provided feedback that there is a need for increased access to ox ploughs to best uses the seed provided and this has not been acted upon.

CTP and their local partners have adapted the project to meet the changing needs of the affected communities; for example, by changing the food security

¹²² Hope Agency for Relief and Development (HARD), The Organization for Children's Harmony (TOCH), Africa Development Aid (ADA), and Caritas Malakal.

component from CVA to direct food distribution because of low availability of food items in the local markets. Needs identification involves the triangulation of secondary resources, community consultations and available needs assessment data.

Which parts of the response have been the most appropriate and why?

All components from the multi-sector project implemented by CTP and partners were appreciated by the consulted programme participants and affected communities, without any one component being seen as more appropriate than another.

"The integrated support of provision of seeds (vegetables, crops), NFI, hand pump rehabilitation, hygiene promotion, psychosocial support and was good and appreciated by the community. It provided some relief and opportunity to continue with normal activities."

- Government representative, South Sudan¹²³

The distribution of crop seeds (sorghum, groundnuts, and cowpea), vegetable seeds, and hand tools was the main pillar of the project, being received by all programme participants, whilst other sectors (food assistance, WASH, NFIs, resilience, and protection) were not received by all given limited resources and differing levels of vulnerability.

"The project implemented by the [local] partners was appropriate because it increased food production and income generation capacity."

- Humanitarian Community Representative, South Sudan¹²⁴

"Seeds distribution improved nutrition and hand pumps rehabilitated helped in clean water consumption and livestock consumption."

- Programme Participant, South Sudan¹²⁵

"HARD distributed jerrycans and sufurias [saucepans] during the period of double tragedy (conflict and flooding) to displaced people which was highly appreciated. Though it was not enough to all displaced and targeted only the most vulnerable it was very useful. Agencies here rarely distribute NFIs."

- Government representative, South Sudan¹²⁶

Nonetheless, there were some challenges with timely implementation of many of the components of the project, including the distribution of seeds and hand tools due to

¹²³ KII, Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

¹²⁴ KII, Islamic Relief, South Sudan

¹²⁵ KII, Manloor Payam, Tonj North County

¹²⁶ KII, Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

late procurement, the distribution of some of the NFIs due to inaccessibility, the rehabilitation/repair of some of the boreholes, and the training of the Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLAs). These delays are acknowledged by CTP; however, it should also be noted that funding came in small batches at different times, from different sources; therefore, some activities were added at later stages.

"Initially ground nut beans were distributed and sorghum seeds, also vegetable seeds were provided, and farm implements but they came late. When we cultivated, floods came, and seeds did not germinate well. If seeds had come early ground nuts would have matured before the floods."
- Programme Participant, South Sudan¹²⁷

"Vegetable seeds should be distributed during onset of dry season starting from October to December which is the right for planting vegetable."
- Government representative, South Sudan¹²⁸

Are there lifesaving or life-sustaining needs that are not addressed by this response and why?

There were two frequent lines of feedback from the programme participants and the affected communities, including access to an ox plough for seed cultivation and increased assistance with food or cash.

"Most of the needs were provided though in small quantities... ox plough can increase farming scale and was not provided."
- Programme Participant, South Sudan¹²⁹

The feedback related to greater access to an ox plough was raised during community consultations before project implementation, but not adequately recognised enough and was the main complaint raised programme participants and affected communities during the consultations.

TOCH/HARD called a meeting at [the] women centre in Warrap. They asked our needs [and we] requested cash, seeds and food, farm input, tools, ox plough."
- Programme Participant, South Sudan¹³⁰

¹²⁷ KII, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

¹²⁸ KII, County Agriculture Department, Manloor Payam, Tonj North County

¹²⁹ KII, Manloor Payam, Tonj North County

¹³⁰ KII, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

"About 250 households ran from the border during conflict and only 150 received food and seeds support.... 100 displaced missed out. We were told resources were not enough."

- Programme Participant, South Sudan¹³¹

How did the response adapt to meet the changing needs of the affected communities?

CTP and partners decided to change the food security component from cash voucher assistance (CVA) to direct food distribution as a result of outbreaks of community violence and continued economic decline. Before project implementation started, a market assessment was conducted which found that many food items were not available in the local markets and would require programme participants travelling vast distances to purchase these items.

During the reflection and learning session, CTP and partners also highlighted that TOCH had an active peace building project running simultaneously that was also beneficial to some project participants of this project, leading to a discussion on how to mainstream peace building into future projects. CTP and partners also reflected on how the several different funding channels received for the project (Trócaire, CAFOD, Caritas Australia, Passionists) allowed additional thematic components to be added to address differing needs, for example the inclusion of food assistance to the most vulnerable, and extension workers to support farmers.

To what extent do the project designs reflect identified needs and priorities of affected communities, including those of vulnerable groups?

CTP uses secondary data to identify the needs and priorities of affected communities, and this is complemented by community consultations, including psychosocial (PSS) and farmers groups, and available needs assessment data. Secondary data included the inter-agency Initial Rapid Needs Assessment (IRNA) which TOCH and HARD had participated in, IPC analysis, and project data from a previous project funded by the South Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SSHF).¹³² HARD also led an RNA in one of the three payams targeted. Nonetheless, it was reflected by CTP and partners that RNAs should be conducted more frequently to better understand the needs and to support with the development of structured baselines.

Is the response connected to resilience and longer-term programming?

CTP and partners designed the church appeal project with a strong emphasis on resilience including increased food production, access to water and WASH services, and protection issues linked to conflict. There is evidence that the project is helping affected communities to better withstand future shocks, however, the high volume

¹³¹ KII, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

¹³² The church appeal project was an extension of the SSHF project, working in the same communities to deliver similar interventions.

of needs versus resources means that on-going programming is needed to ensure continued resilience.

CTP and partners put more emphasis on community level system strengthening than governmental; including the creation of DRR committees and provision of extension workers, given that government level systems are not established or robust.

To what extent were adequate links to resilience and early recovery actors and interventions created?

It would be accurate to describe the project as both emergency response and resilience, given the multi-sector approach and the choice of sectors such as agriculture and protection, and the decision to rehabilitate / repair boreholes and hand pumps.

"When you look at our country strategy, we are looking at medium- and longer-term programming, peace building and emergency response – following the nexus approach. The special appeals play a key role in allowing funding for the shocks and protect the longer-term funding."
- CTP Senior Management, South Sudan¹³³

"TOCH had a peace building project which complimented the CTP funded activities. With the CTP project, shelters were constructed at the women centre for women friendly space, and women held discussions there including psychosocial support and GBV issues. We can say many people are aware of issues on protection, GBV including forced early marriages. The conflict started in 2019 May and continued until June 2021. We can now say we have peace for almost a year (11 Months to be specific)."
- Community Leader, South Sudan¹³⁴

Furthermore, CTP highlighted that the project was connected to their Ireland Civil society partnership (ICSP) project which had a longer-term focus on resilience.

Is there any evidence that the response is helping affected communities to better withstand future shocks, such as subsequent or future droughts?

There is evidence that the project did help affected communities to better withstand future shocks from the programme participants and affected communities.

¹³³ KII, Deputy Country Representative (Surge), CTP, South Sudan

¹³⁴ KII, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

"Seeds distributed increased food production. Life skills activities attracted income. Dignity kits for girls improved school attendants."
- Programme Participant, South Sudan¹³⁵

"Agricultural inputs increased food production."
- Programme Participant, South Sudan¹³⁶

However as mentioned above, due to the high volume of needs and the limited resources available, on-going programming is needed to ensure continued community resilience.

"Wider support is needed to promote resilience. Vegetable seeds were provided but hand pumps not enough... they cannot cultivate with hand pump water in the dry season."
- Government representative, South Sudan¹³⁷

"[The assistance] added to my living condition... I did not have ability to buy seeds, so I got a little support. Something small."
- Programme Participant, South Sudan¹³⁸

"After VSLA group was established, the project ended quickly. But we have the VSLA group, and it is still functioning."
- Programme Participant, South Sudan¹³⁹

Protection assistance was highlighted most frequently during the consultations as increasing resilience, for example community sensitisation about the referral pathways. However, continued resources are needed to ensure the continual update of the referral pathways developed by TOCH as co-chair of the Protection Sub Cluster.

"PSS group improves on our life skills."
- Programme Participant, South Sudan¹⁴⁰

"Referral pathway was developed and updated every three months to promote sustainability."
- Protection Sub Cluster, South Sudan¹⁴¹

¹³⁵ FGD, Manloor Payam, Tonj North County

¹³⁶ FGD, Manloor Payam, Tonj North County

¹³⁷ KII, Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

¹³⁸ KII, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

¹³⁹ KII, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

¹⁴⁰ KII, Manloor Payam, Tonj North County

¹⁴¹ KII, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

What is the community's perspective on the support they need to sustain change?

Programme participants and affected communities highlighted the need for on-going programming covering the same sectoral assistance, and increasing reach, to sustain resilience.

"Towards the end of the project, we were asked about our needs in future projects. The farmers' group mentioned ox plough, vegetable seeds, and crop seeds. Other people mentioned food pack, NFI and dignity kits and mentioned that these items were only provided to a small group of needy people, yet many people had been affected and were needy but left out."

- Community Leader, South Sudan¹⁴²

To what extent has there been engagement with communities and local and national government on building resilience? For example, system strengthening to improve response and mitigation to the negative impact of future droughts?

CTP and partners have put more emphasis on community level system strengthening; for example, DRR committees that are trained and provided resources for different shocks, particularly flooding, displacement, and conflict. However, it was highlighted that it was a challenge to do this at government levels as systems are not established or robust. Extension workers were funded as part of the project, to fill a gap left by the government, to work with farmers to increase their understanding and knowledge of agroecology concepts and practice.

"[They have] done capacity strengthening in various fields, food security and livelihoods, protection committees, nutrition, engaging and updating protection risks... engaging communities in all sectors. Training on flood adaptation and peace building from other programmes is integrated in protection and other projects."

- Protection Sub Cluster, South Sudan¹⁴³

How well coordinated is the response and with what consequences?

Coordination through the sub-national and national mechanisms is strong including information sharing through the clusters and coordination humanitarian activities using the 5W matrix to avoid the duplication of activities. Furthermore, CTP has provided support to their partner TOCH with co-hosting the protection sub-cluster at the sub-national level and to develop and update GBV referral pathways (on-going resourcing is needed to maintain this).

For the church appeal project, CTP and partners used a consortium model which has faced challenges particularly regarding the sharing of resources; however, there is evidence of effective communication and collaboration between the three parties, including timely planning and monthly meetings.

¹⁴² KII, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

¹⁴³ KII, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

How have coordination mechanisms supported in providing coordinated and complementary assistance to those in greatest need? Is there any evidence that coordination helped to avoid duplications and to fill gaps?

CTP and partners actively participate in cluster coordination meetings and working groups at sub-national (state) and national level, with partners focused on participating or co-hosting at sub-national level. In these platforms, CTP and partners share information on activities through the 5Ws, participate in monthly meetings, and share experiences and technical knowledge.

TOCH is co-host of protection at the sub-national level in Tonj North County, alongside the Ministry of Gender. For this project, TOCH has led on coordination related to protection and HARD on food security and livelihoods at sub national level; in addition to linking to the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) and relevant line ministries.

"HARD/TOCH are aware on coordination and collaboration, ensuring the administration is informed."

- Government representative, South Sudan¹⁴⁴

As co-host of protection at the sub-national level, TOCH has been actively supporting the mapping and updating of the GBV referral pathways. Key staff leading this work were funded under this project, so CTP are TOCH are trying to ensure continued resources to ensure TOCH's work and position as a lead local protection actor is retained.

"[They should] continue being involved in mapping service areas... sharing available resources... [and] coordinating in gap identification guided by the RRC."

- Protection Sub Cluster, South Sudan¹⁴⁵

There is clear evidence that HARD/TOCH coordinates with other humanitarian stakeholders and the RRC to avoid duplication.

"Information sharing was done to avoid duplication."

- Humanitarian Community Representative, South Sudan¹⁴⁶

"HARD/TOCH involves stakeholders and RRC in their work to align it with humanitarian work in the county. RRC is the go between with the line ministries, but HARD/TOCH can work directly with line ministries and inform RRC."

- Government representative, South Sudan¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ KII, Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

¹⁴⁵ KII, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

¹⁴⁶ KII, Islamic Relief, South Sudan

¹⁴⁷ KII, Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

How was project design influenced by sector working groups?

There was no specific reference in the data collected for this review to demonstrate project design was strongly influenced by the clusters, apart from the proven engagement of CTP and partners in cluster mechanisms. Nonetheless, when the representative from the humanitarian community were asked if CTP and partners align their activities to sector standards to ensure programme participants are receiving the same support, they answered affirmatively.

"Partners share information about the approach during cluster meeting to ensure they aligned with cluster standards."

- Humanitarian Community Representative, South Sudan¹⁴⁸

To what extent did the communication and collaboration between country offices and partners prove effective in facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the prevailing circumstances on the ground, timely response and in mobilising resources?

Unfortunately, key informant interviews (KIIs) with the senior management of CTP partners were not conducted; however, there is evidence of effective communication and collaboration between CTP and partners from the reflection and learning session which included representatives from the three partner organisations. Best practices highlighted included timely planning and regular monthly meetings between CTP, HARD and TOCH.

One challenge highlighted, was that the project was implemented as a consortium and that the consortium guiding principles were not defined clearly enough regarding the sharing of resources and staffing roles between the sectoral splits.

Is the response providing vulnerable communities with life-saving and life-sustaining assistance in a timely manner?

The use of early warning information by CTP and partners to make timely decisions to undertake early response could be improved and systematised. CTP and partners are using community-based targeting triangulated with IPC analysis to identify programme participants, and there is clear evidence that affected communities are engaged and sensitised on vulnerability criteria – and agree that the most vulnerable were targeted. The level of funding available means that vulnerability outweighs the resources.

Please note: staff from Trócaire HQ did raise challenges with the timely submission of the drought response proposal by CTP. There was an approximate six-month gap between the availability of Trócaire special appeal funds for South Sudan and the receipt of proposal from CTP to enable drawdown of the funding allocated to them.

¹⁴⁸ KII, Women Development Group (WDG), South Sudan

How did the response utilise early warning information to make timely decisions to undertake early response?

There is some evidence of the use of early warning information, but during the reflection and learning session, CTP and partners highlighted that early warning information is not adequately utilised, although anticipated risks linked to flooding are particularly incorporated into their work with local DRR committees and project design. Senior management at CTP highlighted that the early warning information in use is mostly from UN OCHA – spikes in food insecurity, IPC levels, protection concerns, etc., - then this information is discussed with partners who can verify and get community level information to complement. As such, the utilisation early warning information to make timely decisions to undertake early response could be improved and systematised.

Targeting committees help to ensure vulnerable groups are consulted, and there is evidence of engagement and inclusion of women, youth, and those with disabilities. However, in the future, CTP and partners should consider the engagement of men and boys in protection and gender initiatives.

To what extent was assistance provided according to need and reached the most vulnerable, according to the principles of humanity and impartiality?

CTP and partners use community-based targeting by engaging and collaborating with community leaders, local authorities, women representatives, etc., through establishing and training 'targeting committees'. Vulnerability criteria are discussed and validated by the committee, and the committee support with the identification of programme participants from the affected communities. IPC levels also feature significantly in the identification of geographic areas to focus on, with a focus on IPC level 4 (or above) hotspots.

There is strong evidence from the consultations with programme participants and affected communities, that the most vulnerable in their communities are targeted; however, there is an understanding that there are limited resources available to reach all the vulnerable. A high percentage of programme participants and affected communities have the vulnerability criteria explained to them.

"The organisation had explained during the inception meeting.... the categories of people targeted by the project was based on their level of vulnerability and this is because the limited resources can't serve the entire population of the community."
- Programme Participant, South Sudan¹⁴⁹

"[The] most vulnerable were reached. Those who got seeds are still feeding from the products."
- Programme Participant, South Sudan¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ FGD, Manloor Payam, Tonj North County

¹⁵⁰ KII, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

To what extent were cross-cutting issues such as gender, age, disability, and the environment given adequate consideration in the response?

The targeting committees helped to ensure vulnerable groups were consulted, and there was evidence of strong engagement with women and youth in relation to protection activities; for example, PSS and life skills focused particularly on women and adolescent girls. CTP senior management also highlighted that CTP have been collaborating with Humanity and Inclusion (HI) to ensure integration of disabled persons into programmes – and have developed an MoU with HI on this collaboration.

Did the response have any unintended, positive, or negative effects on drought-affected people, local conflict dynamics, or national systems?

There were no affirmative unintended consequences from the project raised during the consultations with stakeholders for the review. However, during the reflection and learning session with CTP and partners there was a discussion on how the sensitisation of women *only* on women's rights, without also including men and/or their spouses in these activities, could have the potential to cause conflict at the household level. For future programming, CTP and partners want to ensure the engagement of men and boys in protection and gender initiatives.

To what extent are protection and accountability supporting design and implementation of the response?

There is some evidence of protection mainstreaming in the church appeal project, with active engagement of the affected communities in targeting the most vulnerable and consultation on their needs. Furthermore, CTP and partners use conflict analysis, 'community dialogues', and safety audits to ensure activities are accepted, accessible, inclusive, and safe. However, programme participants and affected communities are not consistently engaged in project design and have poor awareness of the feedback and complaint mechanisms (FCMs) available to them.

How was protection context analysis incorporated into the response in each country?

Senior management at CTP highlighted that they utilised the protection expertise at Trócaire for support on this project and ensure their Protection Technical Adviser is highly involved at all stages. During the reflection and learning session, it was emphasised that a conflict assessment and analysis was conducted at the initial phase to identify protection issues given their understanding that if targeting was not done correctly, it can cause community conflict. Furthermore, CTP and partners conduct dialogues with affected communities on harmful social norms which booster their understanding of protection concerns. Nonetheless, there was a recognition that ensuring regular protection analysis could be improved given the context is very changeable.

Is there evidence that partners' ensured protection mainstreaming and how was this monitored?

"Protection is a key component and we identify the protection needs of the community."

- CTP Senior Management, South Sudan¹⁵¹

CTP and partners clearly prioritise protection mainstreaming, ensuring the most vulnerable have access to the assistance, and there is much pride in the GBV referral pathway which is updated every three months. In addition, during the reflection and learning session, CTP and partners highlighted that a project safety audit was carried out to ensure activities are accepted, accessible, inclusive, and safe. There was no evidence for or against effective protection mainstreaming monitoring from the data collection. CTP and partners did highlight that in the future they would like to be better able to map protection issues across locations.

To what extent are programme participants engaged in the design of the response projects?

The majority of programme participants and affected populations confirmed that they had been engaged during project design; however, this was not consistent across the consultations and could be an area for CTP and partners to explore in more detail to ensure that affected communities are not only consulted, but actively engaged in project design.

"We were called to Kaomboni primary school to design the way GBV cases were to be supported. Chiefs, Youth, and women leaders were involved."

- Community Leader, South Sudan¹⁵²

What evidence is there of programme participant feedback, including through complaints and feedback mechanisms, leading to project adaptations?

FCMs were in place - mainly through the development of FCM committees at project locations - as were processes to document and address feedback in a timely manner; for example, community feedback supported the adaptation from CVA to direct food distribution. However, consultations with programme participants and affected communities demonstrated a poor awareness of the FCMs in general.

"[I am] unaware of feedback and complaint channel to be used... complaints are made through the administrative hierarchy."

- Programme Participant, South Sudan¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ KII, Deputy Country Representative (Surge), South Sudan

¹⁵² KII, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

¹⁵³ KII, Manloor Payam, Tonj North County

"We usually send our complaints through the chief."
- Programme Participant, South Sudan¹⁵⁴

Recommendations

Appropriateness

- Conduct rapid needs assessments (RNAs) in all project locations to provide a greater precision of needs identification.
- Incorporate monthly market monitoring into projects to continue to allow for timely project adaptations between cash transfer programming (CTP) and direct food distribution.
- Ensure timely procurement or the pre-positioning of stocks for distribution to avoid project delays.

Connectedness

- The drought response strategy should be updated with a greater emphasis on resource mobilisation, on resource planning, and on identifying gaps with greater precision that the country office is best placed to respond to.

Coordination

- Prioritise joint resource mobilisation to ensure TOCH has funding for the staffing needs required to continue as a lead local protection actor.
- Ensure sufficient time if provided for consortium planning, including the completion of detailed teaming and consortium agreements, when working through consortium modalities.

Effectiveness

- Ensure systematic review and action planning related to early warning information to make timely decisions to undertake early response, including the development of contingency plans for drought response programming.
- Consider the engagement of men and boys in protection and gender initiatives to increase awareness across the community and avoid conflict at the household level.¹⁵⁵

Accountability and protection

- Review and build upon what has already been established, particularly focusing on ensuring community orientation on feedback and complaint mechanisms (FCMs).
- Implement multiple FCM options, such as suggestion boxes and toll-free hotlines, to boost accountability to affected populations (AAP).

¹⁵⁴ KII, Awul Payam, Tonj North County

¹⁵⁵ This is already being addressed by CTP.

Annexes

Annex A: Regional Review Matrix

Key Questions	Secondary Questions
<p data-bbox="203 448 557 655">To what extent does the response meet local needs and adapt to changing needs at different phases of the crisis?</p> <p data-bbox="203 699 465 730">(Appropriateness)</p>	<p data-bbox="577 448 1599 480">Which parts of the response have been the most appropriate and why?</p> <p data-bbox="577 520 1895 552">Are there lifesaving or life-sustaining needs that are not addressed by this response and why?</p> <p data-bbox="577 592 1834 624">How did the response adapt to meet the changing needs of the affected communities?</p> <p data-bbox="577 663 2007 727">To what extent do the project designs reflect identified needs and priorities of affected communities, including those of vulnerable groups?</p>

<p>Is the response connected to resilience and early recovery programmes in the different countries?</p> <p>(Connectedness)</p>	<p>To what extent were adequate links to resilience and early recovery actors and interventions created?</p> <p>Is there any evidence that the response is helping affected communities to better withstand future shocks, such as subsequent or future droughts?</p> <p>What is the community's perspective on the support they need to sustain change?</p> <p>To what extent has there been engagement with communities and local and national government on building resilience?</p>
<p>How well coordinated is the response in the different countries, and with what consequences?</p> <p>(Coordination)</p>	<p>How have coordination mechanisms that partners and country offices participate in supported in providing coordinated and complementary assistance to those in greatest need? Is there any evidence that coordination helped to avoid duplications and to fill gaps?</p> <p>How was project design influenced by sector working groups?</p> <p>To what extent did the communication and collaboration between country offices and partners prove effective in facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the prevailing circumstances on the ground, timely response and in mobilising resources?</p>

<p>Is the response providing vulnerable communities with life-saving and life-sustaining assistance in a timely manner?</p> <p>(Effectiveness)</p>	<p>How did the response utilise early warning information and assessment reports to make timely decisions to undertake early response?</p> <p>To what extent was assistance provided according to need and reached the most vulnerable, according to the principles of humanity and impartiality?</p> <p>To what extent were cross-cutting issues such as gender, age, disability, and the environment given adequate consideration in the response?</p> <p>Did the response have any unintended, positive or negative effects on drought-affected people, local conflict dynamics, or national systems?</p>
<p>To what extent are protection and accountability supporting design and implementation of the response?</p> <p>(Protection & accountability)</p>	<p>How was protection context analysis incorporated into the response in each country?</p> <p>Is there evidence that partners' ensured protection mainstreaming and how was this monitored?</p> <p>To what extent are programme participants engaged in the design of the response projects?</p> <p>What evidence is there of programme participant feedback, including through complaints and feedback mechanisms, leading to project adaptations?</p>

Annex B: Data Collection

Data Source (stakeholder)	Data Collection Method	Sampling Size
Programme participants	KIs FGDs Household Survey	Kenya: 6 FGDs, 351 Household Survey Ethiopia: 11 KIs, 9 FGDs Somalia: 22 KIs, 6 FGDs South Sudan: 8 KIs, 4 FGDs
Communities / community leader	KIs	Kenya: 5 KIs Ethiopia: 5 KIs Somalia: 4 KIs, 1 KI District Health Board South Sudan: 4 KIs
CAFOD/Trócaire programme staff & partner programme staff	Reflection and learning session	Each of the four countries held a reflection and learning session using the same session design. Sessions in Ethiopia and Somalia were conducted online and hosted by the consultant, whilst the sessions in Kenya and South Sudan were held in person and the consultant was briefed on the findings.

CAFOD/Trócaire senior management	Klls	4 Klls – one per country
Partner senior management	Klls Presentation	Kenya: 2 Klls Somalia: 2 Klls
CAFOD/Trócaire HQ humanitarian staff	Klls	6 Klls including with representatives from Caritas Australia and SCIAFF

Humanitarian community representative	Klls	Kenya: 1 Kll Ethiopia: 1 Kll South Sudan: 2 Klls
Government representative	Klls	Kenya: 1 Kll Ethiopia: 4 Klls Somalia: 3 Klls South Sudan: 2 Klls
Coordination mechanism representative	Klls	Kenya: 1 Kll Ethiopia: 1 Kll Somalia: 1 Kll South Sudan: 1 Kll

Annex C: Project and Funding Overview

Country	Donor	Funding by country	Total beneficiary reach	Project	Funding by project	Partner	Location	Sector	Beneficiary reach by project
Ethiopia	CAFOD (GBP)	783,750	28,053	ETH 184	268,750	CIFA ¹⁵⁶	Moyale Woreda, Borana Zone	Multi-purpose cash	7,555
				ETH 201	275,000	CIFA	Moyale Woreda, Borana Zone	Multi-purpose cash	10,598
				ETH225 ¹⁵⁷	150,000	Agri Service Ethiopia	Dassench Woreda, South Omo Zone	Multi-purpose Cash	9,900
				ETH232 ¹⁵⁸	90,000	CIFA	Moyale Woreda, Borana Zone	Multi-Purpose Cash and WASH	1,680
	Trocaire (EUR)	385,000	13,544	ETH172	100,000	Agri Service Ethiopia	Dassench Woreda, South Omo Zone	Multi-purpose cash	3,859
				ETH 175	170000	CIFA	Moyale Woreda,	Multi-purpose	6,190

¹⁵⁶ Community Initiative Facilitation & Assistance (CIFA)

¹⁵⁷ Project on-going

¹⁵⁸ Project on-goin

							Borana Zone	cash, WASH	
				ETH 176	115,000	ECC-SDCO/S ¹⁵⁹	Dassench Woreda, South Omo Zone	Multi-purpose cash	3,495
Kenya	CAFOD (GBP)	823,672	62,622	KEN847 ¹⁶⁰	532,698.00	Catholic Diocese of Marsabit	Marsabit county	Food security, WASH	60,972
				KEN848					
				KEN850 ¹⁶¹	150,000	Catholic Diocese of Maralal	Samburu County	Food security, WASH, livelihoods (livestock)	1,250
	Caritas Australia (GBP)	Included in cell above	Included in cell above	KEN847	157,209	Catholic Diocese of Marsabit	Marsabit county	Food security, WASH	Included in the 60,972 above
Somalia	Trocaire (EUR)	605,000	65,214	Emergency WASH Response in Elwak	100,000	ADA	Elwaq	WASH	18,066

¹⁵⁹ Ethiopian Catholic Church Social and Development Commission Branch Office of Soddo-Omorate Sub-Branch Office

¹⁶⁰ Project on-going

¹⁶¹ Project on-going

				Drought Emergency Reponse to Newly Displaced Persons in Luuq District	100,000	SHRA	Luuq	Food security, WASH	8,400
				Provision of SC Food Baskets in Gedo, Somalia	215,000	Trocaire	Luuq, Dollow and Beled Xawa	Food security - linked to nutrition	11,700
				Emergency nutrition delivery linked with protection	50,000	ADA	Elwaq	Nutrition, protection	10,173
				Procurement of nutrition supplies for SAM treatment	100,000	Trocaire	Luuq, Dollow and Beled Xawa	Nutrition	1,875
				Irish Aid NFIs distribution	40,000	Trocaire	Luuq, Dollow	WASH	15,000
South Sudan	CAFOD (GBP)	423,568	31,937	SSD304	95,000	Africa Development Aid (ADA)	Malakal County, Upper Nile State	Food security, protection, peace-building	905
				SSD 305	150,000	Caritas Malakal	Malakal County,	Food security, shelter,	14,700

							Upper Nile State	WASH, peace-building	
				SSD 306	30,000	Hope Agency for Relief and Development (HARD)	Tonj North County, Warrap state	Food security, WASH, Agriculture, NFIs, protection, livelihoods	Included in cell above
				SSD312	148,568	Africa Development Aid (ADA)	Malakal County, Upper Nile State	Food Security & Livelihoods (FSL), Protection and WASH	16,332
	Trocaire (EUR)	316,000	12,000	Provision of Integrated Multi-sector Support to People affected by multiple shocks and disasters	Approx 530,560 EUR	Hope Agency for Relief and Development (HARD) The Organization for Children's Harmony (TOCH)	Tonj North County, Warrap state	Food security, WASH, Agriculture, NFIs, protection, livelihoods	12,000
	Caritas Australia (AUD)	200,000							
	Passionists (GBP)	50,000							