

Executive Summary

Introduction

Somalia has been characterized by violence, insecurity and chaos since the early 1990's. Large parts of the country have been unsafe throughout much of this period. Insurgents have regularly controlled large parts of the country. Further, localised inter-clan conflicts have been common and conflict resolution has often been violent. For most of this period, the Federal government has been very limited in both its commitment and its ability to govern the country in an effective manner.

Throughout most of this period, the States of Somaliland and Puntland in the Northeast and North have fared much better. These two states have witnessed significantly less violence and insecurity. The concerned State governments have been able to provide many government services and perform many governance functions.

As of around 2012, Somalia entered into a new period, characterised by the establishment of permanent political institutions and some important successful military offensives. Since this time, efforts to build peace and to construct the state have made progress, and now long-term peace and stability seems a realistic possibility. Notwithstanding, the progress so far remains fragile and reversible. In particular, with regards to implementing development projects and programmes, there are important challenges.

Within this context, Somalia ratified the UNFCCC in September 2009 and submitted its National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) to the UNFCCC in 2013. The NAPA describes the vulnerability to climate change of Somalian communities and the Somalian people. Even without climate change, the baseline climate is challenging in Somalia, and people have historically been highly exposed to climate hazards, to variability in rainfall, to droughts and to flash floods. As approximately 70% of Somalis are dependent on agriculture and pastoralism, their lives and livelihoods are highly dependent on the natural resource base, leaving them highly exposed to climate hazards.

Climate change projections suggest that the climate hazards will increase in scale and complexity in coming decades, with yet more rainfall variability and increased occurrences of both droughts and flash floods.

The Project "*Enhancing Climate Resilience of the Vulnerable Communities and Ecosystems in Somalia*" responds to this challenge. The fundamental problem addressed by the Project is the vulnerability of Somalian communities and ecosystems to climate hazards, and in particular to climate change. The Project Objective is "*enhanced resilience and improved adaptive capacity of vulnerable Somali communities in pilot areas, and the ecosystems on which they depend, to the adverse impacts of climate change*". The Project has two components:

- Component 1 is enhancing policies, institutional frameworks and government capacities;
- Component 2 is piloting ecosystem based adaptation strategies.

The Project was fully approved for implementation by GEF in November 2014. The Project Document was signed by UNDP and Government in December 2014. It is the first GEF full-sized project to be approved and to start implementation in Somalia. It is scheduled to run until the end of 2018.

In accordance with UNDP/GEF policies, all GEF-funded projects implemented by UNDP are subject to a mid-term evaluation or review. This is the report of the mid-term Review of the Project *Enhancing Climate Resilience of the Vulnerable Communities and Ecosystems in Somalia*. The Review took place

at approximately the Project mid-point. This Review's purpose is to determine the progress being made towards the achievement of outcomes, the reasons behind the progress, and to identify any necessary corrective actions. The Review is to provide a basis for learning. Most specifically, it is to provide the Project managers, the Project team, the Implementation Agency, the implementing partners and UNDP-GEF with strategic, policy and management options for more effectively and efficiently achieving the Project's expected results.

In order to undertake the Review, a Review Team consisting of three experts, one international, two Somalian, was formed. The Review Team was both independent of, and external to, the Project.

Key Findings

Key finding 1: The context makes it extremely challenging to implement a development project or program in Somalia, especially community based activities.

It is reported that many international donors have not been attempting standard development projects, but have operated in a humanitarian mode or in a severely limited development mode. This context has been slowly improving over recent years, and the UN is actively transitioning to a standard development programme.

Key finding 2: The process to formulate the Project and the Project design documents provide an adequate basis for implementing the Project, notwithstanding some gaps and weaknesses.

Overall the Project design phase was adequate. The Project design process and design documents have many strong points, they address most essential issues and they are adequate as a basis for starting the implementation of this Project. Management arrangements are clear. There were very few delays in the Project development and approval process. Notwithstanding, as highlighted in the above sections, there were several gaps and weaknesses – notably with regards to the incomplete Project strategy and the lack of precision, focus and details. Ideally, many or all of the weaknesses would have been addressed during the design phase, but otherwise they could have been addressed at Project Start-up.

Key finding 3: The approach to Project implementation is adequate.

The combination of DIM and LoAs has proven itself effective in assuring efficiency, ownership and oversight in Somaliland and Puntland, with good involvement of PMO and Responsible Partners. However, little has been achieved in the southern States. For Somaliland and Puntland, efforts should be made to transition to more standard implementation modalities as soon as possible. For the southern States, lessons must be learnt – it may be that community based activities cannot be implemented at this stage.

Key finding 4: Most organizations involved in Project governance, management and implementation have been, on the whole, appropriate and effective and have major contributions to its success so far. This notably includes UNDP, the PIT and the Responsible Partners. However, the Project Board and Regional Committees have not performed the required functions. The roles of UNDP and PMO overlap sometimes.

Key finding 5: The approach to Project planning has been mixed with some strengths and weaknesses. It is likely that these weaknesses have limited the Project's impact.

Overall, the approach to planning has many strengths. The main strength is that the annual and quarterly project workplans are prepared regularly and that they are detailed and they are clear. The workplans prepared by each Responsible Partner are of good quality.

The main weaknesses relate to the inadequate inception period, the weaknesses in strategic planning and the resulting lack of connectivity across the Project's activities. With regards to activity planning, despite much technical work and consultation, there were some insufficiencies at some sites.

Key finding 6: Great efforts are allocated to monitoring and reporting. As a result, large amounts of data are collected, and there is good information and reports available. However, the overall monitoring and reporting system remains inadequate. It does not provide answers to some basic questions. It does not appear to directly contribute to Project management or Project decision-making. This may be at least in part to the complex Project structure, the lack of overall strategy and direction, and the challenging logistical situation.

Key finding 7: The Project, in an extremely challenging context, has made numerous remarkable achievements. The achievements have been mostly at the community level. There have also been 'upstream' achievements. These interim results and the partnerships created provide a good basis and good platform for further developing the Project. Whereas all activities have been highly relevant, both effectiveness and efficiency are considerably lower. At several sites, the results are not adequate. Finally, compared to most GEF countries, the cost in US\$ per achievement is high.

The Project, in an extremely challenging context has made numerous remarkable achievements at the community level. It has increased resilience and improved livelihoods. The achievements made so far result mostly from hard work 'on the ground', working in a focused manner with key partners on individual activities. The Project has also made some upstream achievements, in Puntland, Somaliland and at the Federal level – although progress is constrained due to the need to have three separate processes for Somaliland, Puntland and the Federal level. Around all these achievements, the Project has generated many important partnerships and started creating momentum. These interim results provide a good basis for further developing the Project. All activities at all levels focus on climate resilience and are highly relevant.

The activities have been isolated – the horizontal and vertical connections between activities are weak or unclear. In addition, at some sites, shortcomings in the results were observed by this Review – such as inappropriate siting and displeased beneficiaries. Overall, the chances of sustainability and replicability are not high. Also, work 'on the ground' has not even commenced in the southern States.

Key finding 8: The Project has successfully paid attention to women and gender, but has not made optimal efforts to mainstream gender or to empower women.

The Project has one Output that focuses only on women. This Output has advanced satisfactorily and this should be helping Somali women to adapt to climate change. Other than the one Output, no special measures have been taken to ensure gender considerations are mainstreamed, or that women benefit specially from this Project. Whereas women have benefitted from grants through the cooperatives, men have benefitted for paid work under the civil works. Overall women may have benefitted equally to men. The Project can be considered, in many ways, to be gender neutral.

Conclusions

The Project, in an extremely challenging context, has made numerous remarkable achievements.

The Project has demonstrated that it is possible to undertake community based, climate change adaptation projects in Somalia, at least in Somaliland and Puntland. The Project has also demonstrated that this is a worthwhile aim.

However, the Project has also demonstrated that, compared to most countries, Somalia is a challenging and expensive place to implement development projects. And, for the southern States, it may not yet be feasible to run community-oriented, development projects.

The Project has adopted an approach whereby it first focuses on 'on-the-ground' actions, and uses this to demonstrate success and to build partnerships and momentum. The on-the-ground actions have delivered success *before* steps have been taken to clarify the Project's strategic aspects. This approach has been validated so far in this Project. By the mid-term, the Project has created a good foundation. It has the potential to continue to be a highly successful project.

However, there are some weaknesses in the approach, and some subsequent weaknesses in the results achieved. Hence, corrective measures will be necessary if the Project is to meet its full potential.

Recommendations

1. To UNDP: Revitalize the Project Board

- The Project Board is essential to ensure that the Project has the appropriate strategic guidance and appropriate buy-in from all partners. These are essential for sustainability and replicability, as well as to build the capacity of Board members.
- Until now the Project Board has not been functioning. It has not met regularly, and, when it has met, it has not performed as a Board. This is in part a reflection of the low capacity at the Federal level, and a result of the logistical and institutional challenges in Somalia.
- UNDP should put significant effort into the revitalization of the Board or of a similar governance entity that can perform the functions expected of a Board – i.e. providing strategic guidance and generating high level buy-in.

2. To PMO: Clarify and strengthen the linkages between 'on the ground' pilot activities and upstream activities

- The Project includes pilot projects (under Component 1), the lessons from which should presumably feed into the upstream work (under Component 2), thereby supporting sustainability, replicability and upscaling.
- Until now the linkages, both practical and conceptual, between pilot activities and upstream activities, have been neither clear nor strong. The pilot activities occur totally separate from the upstream activities, as well as from each other. The concepts of 'pilot' and 'upscaling' are not clear in the Project approach.
- The PMO should launch a study to determine: (i) what can be learnt from the Project's pilot activities; (ii) how the Project should learn from the pilot activities; (iii) how to ensure that the appropriate state and national organizations learn from the Project activities; and (iv) the specific actions needed to ensure that these downstream – upstream linkages are operationalized.
- This may be developed as a full *theory of change* for the Project.

3. To UNDP: Establish the Regional Committees

- The three Regional Committees are necessary to ensure there is coordination and collaboration across all activities within one region, and that activities within one region form a coherent, strategic, mutually supportive package, and that local activities enjoy the support of regional level decision-makers.
- The Regional Committees have not been established. Partly as a result of this, individual activities within each region are often isolated. The Responsible Partners do not collaborate or coordinate sufficiently in a region. There are limited connections across activities at different sites, or different times.
- UNDP should establish the Regional Committees. The following steps are suggested: (i) the main Project counterpart in each region proposes Committee members; (ii) UNDP determines the tasks of the Committee; (iii) the PMO organizes one Committee meetings at least every six months; and (iv) PMO maintains communications between meetings.

4. To the Government of Somalia and UNDP: Consider cancelling community based activities in the southern States and reallocating the budget savings

- The Project document allocates a significant budget to implementing community based activities in the southern States of Somalia.
- Until now, despite the great efforts of various units in UNDP, and of the PMO, no contract or agreement has been signed for activities in Southern States. Further, should the contracts be signed, the security situation will mean that any activities are greatly constrained, and monitoring difficult.
- The funds allocated to these community based activities could be reallocated to useful activities in other components of the Project.
- If no contracts are signed by 31/7/2017, UNDP and Government of Somalia should meet to decide on whether these funds are to be reallocated.

5. To PMO: Initiate and undertake a thorough, community based, participatory planning process in at least 3 sites in Puntland and Somalia

- Community based planning is essential to ensure: (i) community ownership; (ii) the activities take place within a strategic framework and work towards a clear long term goal; (iii) priorities are set appropriately; (iv) there are linkages and synergies between actions; (v) monitoring and reporting is effective; and (vi) additional funds can be mobilized. This greatly increases chances for sustainability at the community level.
- Until now, for good reasons, actions have taken place at the community level on an individual or isolated basis, in the absence of a community or site-based plan. Other weaknesses with individual activities have included (not at all sites): insufficient technical and economic assessment; insufficient consideration of climate change; and insufficient consultation.
- PMO to select at least three sites, with at least one in Puntland, and at least one in Somaliland, and undertake a thorough and participatory planning process. These will be sites were activities have already been supported by the Project. The planning will build on the existing activities and existing partnerships. It should also:
 - Be based on a good social, economic and physical assessment of the overall site;
 - Identify climate change challenges, and specify how to determine climate change adaptation actions – as opposed to standard development actions;
 - Undertake an economic assessment of proposed actions, with an estimate of the cost-benefit analysis and of the economic internal rate of return.

6. To PMO: Address all the potential shortcomings identified at sites by the Review

The MTR identified shortcomings at several sites (see table Table 10 in main text). A timely, specific and dedicated response is required for each these. However, the response must be streamlined –

there is no need for a major bureaucratic exercise – this recommendation is for a rapid study and consultation at each listed site to clarify the problem and recommend a solution. See Table 13 in main text for full details.