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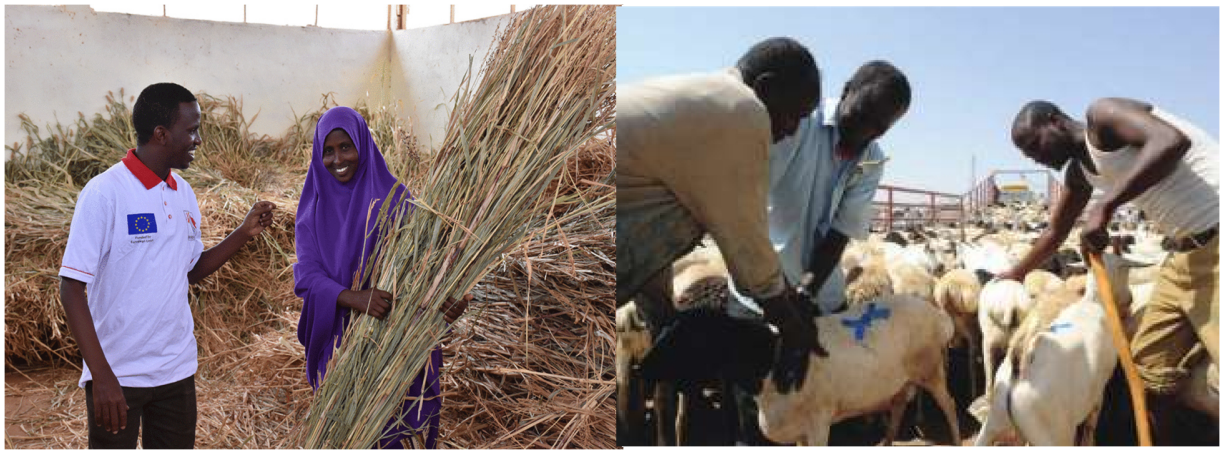
Evaluation Report

Somalia Information and Resilience Building Action Programme (SIRA) – Phase 1.

September 2022



SWALIM
Somalia Water and Land Information Management

FSNAU
Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit - Somalia

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ii. Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.
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ACRONYMS

FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FCS	Food Consumption Score
FFP	Food for Peace
FSNAU	Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit
HDD	Household Dietary Diversity
HH	Household
HFIAS	Household Food Insecurity Access Scale
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
JRA	Joint Resilience Action
MoAD	Somaliland Ministry of Agriculture and Development
MoLFD	Somaliland Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Development
PIC	Project Implementation Committee
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PPI	Poverty Probability Index
SIRA	Somalia Information and Resilience Building Action Programme
SWALIM	Somalia Water and Land Information Management
TLU	Tropical Livestock Units
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USD	US Dollar
USAID	The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Background

The Somalia Information and Resilience Building Action (SIRA) contributes to the larger Somalia Joint Resilience Action (JRA) Framework launched by WFP, UNICEF and FAO to contribute to resilience building in two regions of Somaliland (Awdal and Togdheer). In 2018, the Government of Switzerland developed a 9-year entry proposal with FAO – SIRA – with a 10-months opening phase to concretely identify interventions that contribute towards a longer term resilience building of the Somalia communities and provision of reliable data for decision making. These form the two primary objectives of the SIRA project that the evaluation focused on.

During the opening phase of SIRA, community consultation workshops with livestock stakeholders in Awdal region, identified fodder production as a priority value chain to be promoted by the project. The initial fodder value chain assessments indicated:

- ✓ Marginal development with producers mainly dependent on crop residues and natural pastures for livestock production.
- ✓ There are few exclusive fodder producers with a primary focus on growing fodder commercially within the region; estimated 65 fodder producers at the start of the project were selling grass fodder and crop residues with potential to become more commercially-oriented.
- ✓ Further, an estimated 7500 households in target districts produce fodder for their own consumption.
- ✓ However, these producers are not organized and do not have the necessary capacities, lack relevant information, extension services and have no access to quality input supply chain to maximize benefits from fodder production.
- ✓ The Government regulatory role in the sector is overall weak or absent.
- ✓ There are few community based fodder associations/cooperatives; fodder traders and small scale private enterprises that gives the programme the opportunity to intervene to enhance the overall fodder value chain.
- ✓ Women participation in the fodder value chain in Awdal region is limited to the lower side of the chain with limited benefits and opportunities of enhancing income. According to gender analysis carried out during the inception phase of the SIRA programme, women earned less than half compared to men, had less access to resources and with less decision-making powers.

The planned first phase SIRA programme aimed to improve household income and overall resilience through the promotion of fodder production and marketing and reducing the risks to lives and livelihoods by providing information for decision making and early action by contributing to FSNAU & SWALIM. During the phase, the project primarily focused on fodder value chain development in target districts of Awdal region, while at the same time improving the overall institutional capacity for effective planning, decision-making and response during emergencies with the availability of timely information from FSNAU & SWALIM.
Around 75,000 households were expected to benefit from early warning and early action information provided through FSNAU & SWALIM, further the larger Somalia Government, national institutions and development partners are expected to gain from information sharing in order to better plan and regulate drought emergencies and inform community resilience building.

The evaluation, based on accounts by the implementing agencies, community members, producer associations and producer cooperatives found that the first phase of the project has succeeded in its objectives as follows:

- ✓ The project targeted priority needs that were collectively identified both by stakeholders and communities as a mechanism to address drought emergencies;
- ✓ The project successfully implemented planned activities and achieved the objectives of both increased fodder production and improved food security as well as use of early warning information for relevant action;

- ✓ The project interventions were logically designed to enhance impact. This was through a focus on capacity development through skills transfers, provision of inputs and enhancing productivity including commercialization of fodder;
- ✓ All targeted communities reported high levels of fodder production despite some challenges as elaborated in the report below;
- ✓ All targeted communities reported receiving relevant inputs including fodder storage facilities, fodder machinery and relevant technical skills;
- ✓ The organization of the communities in associations and cooperatives led to an uptake of commercialization of fodder at a larger scale before the drought emergency led to communities prioritizing feeding their livestock;
- ✓ According to community accounts, the sale of fodder and use of fodder to feed their livestock enabled them to save most of their livestock as the drought worsened;
- ✓ The various stakeholders including but not limited to FAO, Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Development, University of Hargeisa, FSNAU and SWALIM played their roles under the leadership of FAO in ensuring the planned activities were achieved;
- ✓ Access to relevant early warning information by communities was confirmed by communities including understanding of various shocks, actions to take to address the impact of the shocks and decision making processes both at individual and community level;
- ✓ All communities visited during the primary data collection confirmed existence of Community Action Plans that define the roadmap to addressing disaster risks affecting the community;
- ✓ The project implementation and project steering committees led in the project learning and coordination both within the project stakeholders and amongst the wider relevant stakeholders;
- ✓ Involvement of women in the fodder value chain was highly visible and spoken about especially at community level, although more needs to be done in terms of involvement in decision making at the cooperative level;
- ✓ Despite the successes, the drought emergency of 2021 – 2022 affected the speed upon which change could be realized as the largely rain-fed fodder production subsidized due to lack of adequate water;
- ✓ Different target communities seemed to be aware of the progress being made by other target communities and a sense of competition to outperform each other emerged from most of the focus group discussions (FGDs).

B. Study Design

The evaluation adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection as described below. For the quantitative method, the evaluation sampled 337 households drawn from 21 clusters in Baki and Borama districts of Awdal region of Somaliland, Somalia. The survey team administered a questionnaire composed of indicators from SIRA project.

The qualitative methodology used both focused group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) where 14 FGDs – seven each in Baki and Borama districts and 9 KIIs including FAO, SWALIM, FSNAU, Ministry of Livestock both at federal and Somaliland levels and livestock traders were conducted. The FGDs and KIIs used open-ended questionnaires with the FGDs conducted in Somali language.

C. Interesting findings from the evaluation

Benefits of fodder availability on retaining livestock within the community: Only 30% of the respondents opted to send livestock in search of pasture, this coping strategy was rampant before the project and played a key role in contributing to food and nutrition insecurity due to unavailability of livestock products to the household.

Poverty: Using the latest version of the Somalia Poverty Probability Index (PPI) and a poverty line of $1.90/day (2011 PPP), the survey showed respondents had a high probability of poverty, indicating that there is still a lot that needs to be done with the target vulnerable population. Of the 337 respondents, 93% had a poverty probability of 92.5%; 5% had a poverty probability of 81.1% and 2% had a poverty

probability of 73.5%. This is largely attributed to the 2021-2022 drought emergency which is considered the worst in the last 40 years and has significantly led to loss of productive assets.

Household Asset Ownership: The sampled households in Baki and Borama district are mostly pastoralists, and they are vulnerable to shocks and stresses, especially from drought and disease. A majority of the surveyed households (67%) own land while 70% confirmed livestock ownership compared to 87.5% in the baseline, with the reduction attributed to the prolonged impact of the drought emergency, movement of livestock owners and death of over 3 million livestock in Somalia all attributed to the current drought. This attributed to the benefit of the project considering the significant livestock losses to the impact of the drought emergency. The communities confirmed through the focused group discussions that they managed to save at least 1 to 2 tropical livestock units[1] of livestock using the fodder produced as part of the project. In terms of women's ownership of animals within households, 35% of the women individually owned cattle, 21% of women owned goats and 39% owned chicken. This was also attributed to the gender transformation that was driven by the project.

Impact of the drought emergency on food security: It is worth mentioning that the 24-hour recall used in estimating status of food security occurred at the height of drought emergency when Somalia is categorized as risking moving to famine. Majority (94%) of the households consumed fewer than three meals the previous day. The Household Food Insecurity Access related conditions found that:
A little over a half (56%) of the households are severely food insecure (i.e., households cannot access the right quantity and quality of food). About a half (46%) of the respondents had no food to eat in their households at least once in the last 4 weeks. A little over a third (36%) of households ran out of food due to lack of resources over the last 4 weeks. 43% of households had insufficient food quality due to lack of resources over the last 4 weeks. All these point to the impact of the drought emergency in curtailing some of the achievements of the first phase of the SIRA programme. Despite this, the food security situation of the SIRA programme beneficiaries was significantly better than the rest of the population affected by the drought emergency.

Savings: The average savings of interviewed households was USD ($0.91), with only 10% of the surveyed households having any savings, which was not given a value in the baseline, and 55% of them had savings with a savings group and main (42%) source of savings being fodder, livestock and crop sale.

Gender Dynamics: 39% of women give input into household decision making on livelihood activities within their households especially around fodder and food crop production, while only 9% are involved in decision making of major household expenditures. The focused group discussions also found that between 25% and 30% of organized community group leadership roles are held by women which is attributed to the gender transformative design of the project.

Index of Social Capital: There is a strong bonding social capital compared to bridging social capital amongst the surveyed households. All the focused group discussions attributed their success to the organizations within the community in the form of cooperatives and associations as playing a role in the successes witnessed.

[1] A Tropical Livestock Unit (TLU) is defined as a mature animal weighing 250 kg (Houerou and Hoste 1977; Stotz 1983). A TLU can be either 1 camel or 1.4 cattle or 10 goats/sheep or 100 chicken

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

D. Overview of the SIRA Intervention

The evaluation aimed to assess (1) what the most effective and specific strategies and interventions were and what strategies and interventions were redundant, (2) what enabling factors and/or obstacles were and (3) how gender and inclusion sensitive the realized outcomes are.

SIRA project is working with consortium members to build resilience for agropastoral households improved through increased. Households maintained and improved livelihoods and income to access nutritious foods. This project aims to achieve the following outcomes; 1: Households income enhanced from the sale of fodder; 2: risks reduced to people's lives and livelihoods through provision of information for action.

The project has a set of layered, integrated, and sequenced interventions, informed by the four pathways of change as captured in the theory of change. The hypothesis of the intervention is that if provides an appropriate combination of social and economic interventions, for the community with a focus on enhancing gender equality and that households will graduate out of extreme poverty, with improved social standing, sustainable livelihoods, and improved food security, human capital investment, and resiliency to shocks.

The theory of change has defined four main pathways with specific activities per pathway in order to achieve the outcomes of the project as show below:

Fodder production and quality enhanced

- In the ToC Pathway which relates organization of fodder producers to groups/associations and strengthen the existing ones and aggregate into cooperatives.
- Enhancing capacity of fodder producers on reseeding, harvesting regimes as well as manure application and seed production.
- Linking local fodder seed producers with input suppliers.
- Capacity development on fodder value addition and diversification to broaden fodder range targeting different markets.
- Cooperatives / associations, fodder producers, instruments and their government's commitment to them to enable fodder production incorporating women and women organizations.

Access to markets for fodder producers and traders improved

- Establish and rehabilitation of fodder marketing infrastructure.
- Women fodder trader groups established and aggregated into associations.
- Establish linkages between cooperatives, women groups and financial institutions.
- Commercial local feed processors trained on feed processing and value addition and marketing.
- Local manufacturers trained on the fabrication of processing and value addition adding machines and tools.
- Fodder marketing information sharing networks formed.
- Facilitate business to business forums.

Access to markets for fodder producers and traders improved, institution capacity supported and regulatory framework

- Facilitate training of MoLFD extension staff to deliver knowledge on best practice to fodder value chain actors on production, value addition and commercialization of feeds.
- Establish and train agro pastoral field school networks to manage and sustain knowledge delivery on best practice to farmers at community level.
- Technical support to MoLFD to develop a national fodder policy and strategy.
- Develop and distribution of fodder manuals.
- Fodder marketing information sharing platforms established.

Access to timely and reliable information on climate, natural resource, livelihoods food security and nutrition

- Information on fodder market prices, trends, feed importation (quantity and trends) are provided.
- Timely information on weather prediction for informed decision making by producers ,traders and other value chain actors.
- Community action plans developed in close collaboration with producers groups to prevent loss of livelihoods during drought and floods.
- Community action plans implemented to reduce vulnerability of producer groups in response to IPC3 prediction.

B. Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess specific aspects of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and lessons learnt of SIRA programme in achieving its objectives. The evaluation includes transversal themes such as gender, good governance and conflict sensitivity programme management (CSPM) in the programme delivery and is expected to generate learning and recommendations for SDC and the relevant stakeholders. The evaluation is expected to also inform the planned next phase of the programme, and areas for enhanced synergies with other programmes in food security domain of the Swiss Regional Cooperation Programme for the Horn of Africa.

The SIRA programme aimed at improving agro-pastoral livelihoods by focusing on fodder value-chain improvement specifically support communities to enhance and sustain efficient fodder market systems. This is expected to contribute to increased resilience in Somaliland specifically and Somalia in general through, enabling agro-pastoral communities to enhance and sustain efficient fodder production and fodder market system to absorb and adapt to shocks and stresses. It is aligned with the visions of the Somalia National Development Plan, 2017- 2019 (NDP), the 2017-2020 United Nations in Somalia Strategic Framework (UNSF), and targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to implementation areas. As a contribution to the JRA, the project supported communities to enhance their livelihoods, engage with market systems and sustainably manage natural resources for livelihoods. In doing so, SIRA contributes to the JRA outcome 3.

The evaluation focused to assess the performance of the SIRA programme first phase with a focus on the two outcome areas:

- Outcome 1: Household incomes in target communities in Awdal region are enhanced from the sale of fodder.
- Outcome 2: Risks to peoples' lives and livelihoods are reduced through provision of information for action (FSNAU & SWALIM).

C. Survey Methodology

1. Survey design (2 stage cluster sampling)

The evaluation was a participant-based assessment.
For selection prior to the evaluation, the consultants' team worked with key stakeholders to identify key stakeholders and communities where the project is implemented. Firstly, the team conducted consultative meetings with project stakeholders to get buy-in into the processes and proper targeting. Secondly, the consultants carried out the PRA, including social mapping.

Further the project targeted key informants and focused group discussions who are playing a key role in the project including FAO, MoLFD, SWALIM, FSNAU, agriculture extension workers, learning institutions, fodder producers and fodder cooperatives to assess the status of project implementation, document best practices ,barriers to inform recommendations needed to be included in the next phase of implementation.

2. Sampling frame and Sample size determination

The evaluation sample design drew from a sampling frame consisting of the list of all villages with their respective number of households prepared by the consultants in close consultation with local administration.

This evaluation survey was designed to get point estimates for the key indicators listed in the logframe with 95% confidence and 5% margin of error. The indicator values for this survey with percentages and proportions and the appropriate formulas were used to calculate the required sample size per indicators.

3. Sample allocation

Baki and Borama district has a comprehensive, complete, up-to-date list of all villages where the SIRA project is implemented. A two-stage cluster sampling design was selected, the general steps of the sampling units (participants) selection and data collection process are:

Selection of Cluster:
The first stage of sampling involved the selection of the clusters (villages). To determine the number of clusters, the following calculations were done for this sampling frame;

Table 1. Final sample size

# participants per cluster to select	b	min = 15	max = 35
# clusters to select	m = round (n_{final} / b)	35	15
Actual final sample	n_{final} = b * m	337	337

The household survey aimed to interview 35 participants per cluster for this sampling frame, meaning that the survey was to cover 15 clusters (villages).

4. Data Collection Tools

The data collection tool for the evaluation are provided as annexes in this report and included:

1. Household survey questionnaire.
2. Focused Group Discussions tools for cooperatives and community groups.
3. Key Informant Interview tools for various stakeholders involved in the project.

D. Organization of Survey

1. Field staff

Survey enumerators and supervisors were drawn from the community as well as field supervisors. However, to try to minimize bias, the team ensured that no enumerator was surveying his or her own area of residence but rather swapped enumerators' geographic areas for conducting the evaluation.

2. Field Work Activities and Timeframe

Field data collection activities took 5 days. Each enumerator interviewed a maximum of twelve participants per day. The consultants maintained close supervision of field staff during the fieldwork. Considerable care was taken in trying to achieve a high response rate and obtain complete and good quality.

3. Quality Control

The data collection forms in the nine modules contained data validation checks and skip logics that decreased human error during data collection. The tool was digitized through Kobo collect and all quantitative data was collected digitally. Secondly, survey supervisors conducted spot check verifications of the enumerators' data collection. The consultant's data Analyst checked for duplicate entries in the system as well as outliers throughout the data collection exercise. A daily check of survey time stamps and analysis of average completion time was shared out with the survey supervisors and coordination team, flagging any outliers for follow-up.

III. EVALUATION FINDINGS

A. Introduction

The evaluation responded to various questions posed in the terms of reference in line with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria. The evaluation outcome based on these criteria is discussed below in detail.

The quantitative data was from a sampled 327 households translating to a response rate of 63% of the planned target sample of 525 households, which included allowance for a 5% non-response rate. In addition to the household survey, the evaluation conducted 14 focused group discussions with a combined 103 participants, drawn from the Baki and Borama districts. The FGDs included representatives from the farmer associations and cooperatives as well as beneficiary groups drawn from 14 different project target communities. Nine key informant interviews were conducted with implementing stakeholders including officials from FAO, Somaliland Government officials drawn from the Ministry of livestock and Fisheries Development and the local administration at the Awdal regional level (Awdal Regional Governor) and officials from the Borama and Bakig districts, field technical extension officers in the various villages; FSNAU and SWALIM. The consultants could not secure an interview with the University of Hargeisa as planned.

The majority (77%) of the respondents were aged between 15 and 49 years, with an almost equal split of female (48%) and male (52%). Majority of the respondents (64%) are in a single marriage; 29% are married or living together with a spouse who has more than one wife; 2% are widowed; 2% are divorced or separated and only 3% are never married.

B. Relevance of the SIRA project

The evaluation aimed to answer the question on relevance as requested on the terms of reference. ***To what extent the programme has been relevant in relation to the country context, needs and priorities of target beneficiaries including rural women and their communities.***

The evaluation found that the project was relevant to the needs of the target beneficiaries and the prevailing context.

The evaluation sought to look at relevance by answering various sub-questions as highlighted below:

- ✓ Are the SIRA project objectives adequately defined, realistic and feasible and can the results be verifiable?
- ✓ Does the SIRA project theory of change clearly identify the project objectives?
- ✓ Have the outcomes and outputs of the SIRA project appropriately operationalized as envisaged in the theory of change and in line with the needs of the target beneficiaries?
- ✓ How was the structure of the stakeholders defined in a manner that enabled to deliver the proposed theory of change and address the needs of the affected population?
- ✓ Do the target beneficiaries demonstrate ownership of the SIRA project?

The SIRA project's overall goal is resilience for agro-pastoral households improved through increased income from improved fodder value chains. This was to be achieved through two interlinked outcome statements:

- ✓ **Outcome 1**: Household incomes in target communities in Awdal region are enhanced from the sale of fodder. This outcome specifically focused on 7,500 households in the two districts of Baki and Borama in Awdal region of Somaliland, Somalia. This outcome was to be achieved through three interlinked outputs:
  - ➢ Fodder Production and productivity in Awdal region is enhanced.

- Fodder producers and traders improve their access to fodder markets.
- Institutional capacity is supported & regulatory framework for fodder production & marketing is in place.

✓ **Outcome 2**: Risks to peoples' lives and livelihoods are reduced through provision of information for action (FSNAU & SWALIM). This outcome was delivered at national level and covered the entire country. The early warning from this intervention directly benefiting the communities in Awdal region that are targeted for the resilience building action (fodder value chain support). This outcome was to be achieved through two interlinked outputs:

- Technical and organizational capacity of Somali institutions supported at federal and state level to conduct food, nutrition and livelihood security assessment and analysis for policy and programme decision-making.
- Timely information on climate, livelihoods, food security and nutrition collected, processed and results made available to the target community for early warning and early action.

The SIRA project's theory of change is premised on the assumption that

- by improving their capacities, fodder producer associations and cooperatives will increase know-how and improve the value of fodder,
- by linking fodder producers with retrained public and private extension service providers, input suppliers, markets and information (including on markets, natural resources and climate),
- by fodder producers associations and cooperatives constructing fodder processing and storage facilities and promoting business to business forums for innovation and markets,
- and by improving institutional capacities and providing information to national actors through contribution to FSNAU and SWALIM, early action and early warning information is available for Somalia national institutions and communities to better plan, prepare and respond to disasters (including local conflicts), and for Awdal fodder producers to know and use the market space.
- Thereby, producer households enhancing fodder production and household incomes that means the risk to livelihoods are reduced which in turn leads to the resilience of agro-pastoralist households through improved incomes.

The above theory of change was designed to be tested during the project implementation period, between December 2019 and November 2022. Under the leadership and coordination of FAO, the programme utilized the steering platforms - Project Implementation Committee (PIC) and Project Steering Committee (PSC). The coordination meetings were organized semi-annually and facilitated close coordination of the key programme stakeholders at all levels of implementation. The teamwork as cited by the key informants was largely attributed to the success of the project both from an implementation perspective as well as from the target community seeing the various actors working together to deliver one project.

The evaluation found that the theory of change and the SIRA programme design were informed by a multi-stakeholder engagement that defined fodder value chain, and the need for early warning system information as key areas of support required to improve household resilience to climatic and economic shocks. The theory of change clearly links the identified project output and outcome statements with the need of the target beneficiaries.

The various stakeholders and communities confirmed that they were engaged vigorously in the identification of the fodder value chain that was supported by the project. Somalia continues to suffer the impact of climate change through increasingly frequent and recurrent drought emergencies as witnessed in the ongoing 2020 – 2022 Horn of Africa drought emergency. The loss of livestock as a key productive asset in the predominantly pastoralist communities was cited as a key limitation towards attaining

resilience. This scenario further reinforced why the choice of fodder value chain as a key path towards resilience in this context. The project went further to look at fodder from production through commercialization and included an important element of early warning information designed for the context that relies on rain fed production. The theory of change (ToC) thus was relevant to the context of the Awdal region on fodder production and the Somalia country on access to timely early warning information for disaster risk management.

The FGDs with community members identified the support given to enhance fodder production, facilitating market engagement and provision of timely and relevant early warning information on rainfall performance, pasture and browse availability, livestock breeding, crop production, market prices and general food security is in tune with their needs. They perceive this combination of fodder production and access to timely and relevant early warning information to have contributed to the protection of their livestock assets at a time when pastoralists in Somalia are losing their livestock to drought.

The evaluation corroborated the assessment that was conducted during the design of the SIRA project by seeking the household survey respondents' perspectives on the most impactful shocks to them. About half (51%) identified livestock disease as the most important shocks with more than 70% of the respondents confirming ownership of at least 1.02 Tropical Livestock Units of livestock[2]. This was closely followed by sharp food price increase (49%) associated to the drought emergency, crop pests including locusts (48%), too little rain or drought (47%) as shown in the table below.

The FGD participants emphasized on the importance of livestock as not only a source of food and income, but also its importance in the lives of the community where livestock played the role of store of wealth, developing ties through social bonds by sharing livestock and social status accorded through livestock ownership. Therefore, any interventions geared towards protecting and saving the livestock from the impact of the drought emergency are considered the most important in terms of building resilience.

Table 1: Types of Shocks Experienced-Climatic Shocks

Most impactful shock affecting the household over the last 12 months	Respondents	Proportion
Livestock disease (associated with drought)	173	51%
Sharp food price increase (associated with drought)	166	49%
Crop pests including locusts	162	48%
Poor rainfall performance (drought)	158	47%
Unavailability of agricultural or livestock inputs	156	46%
Increase in price of agriculture/livestock inputs	118	35%
Excessive Rains/Flooding	104	31%

In addressing the need for livestock fodder and access to early warning systems, there was a remarkable improvement in the coping strategies adopted by the communities in Baki and Borama districts. Only 30% of the respondents opted to send livestock in search of pasture, this coping strategy was rampant before the project and played a key role in contributing to food and nutrition insecurity due to unavailability of livestock products to the household. This in the evaluation was considered as an early sign of resilience considering the large numbers of people migrating or displaced because of the drought emergency in Somalia. This was further elaborated during the KIIs and FGDs, where it was noted that communities targeted by the SIRA project benefitted from having both Community Action Plans (that enabled them plan how to respond to the drought emergency) and access to fodder as the drought situation worsened. The Community Action Plans were closely linked and informed by the early warning information that was accessible to the communities through short mobile phone messages (SMS) and local radio broadcast.

[2] A Tropical Livestock Unit (TLU) is defined as a mature animal weighing 250 kg (Houerou and Hoste 1977; Stotz 1983). A TLU can be either 1 camel or 1.4 cattle or 10 goats/sheep or 100 chicken

Table 2: Main coping mechanism adopted by the households

LIVESTOCK AND LAND HOLDINGS		
	Frequency	Percentage
Send livestock in search of pasture	100	30%
Sell livestock	112	33%
Slaughter livestock	109	32%
Lease out land	51	15%
Household migration	57	17%

At a time characterized by largescale movement of people due to the drought emergency in Somalia, only 17% of the household survey respondents opted to migrate as a coping mechanism as shown in the table below. This indicates the relevance of the SIRA project in addressing a core problem to drought prone communities.

Table 3: Types of Coping Mechanisms-Migration

Household migrating as a coping mechanism to drought emergency		
	Frequency	Percentage
HH member migrated	57	17%
Migrate (the whole family)	56	16%
Send children or an adult to stay with relative	52	15%

In addition, the evaluation found improved resilience in the communities with only 17% of the respondents taking children out of school to work, while only 15% reduced food consumption in the form of quantity or number of meals per day.

Despite Awdal region not being affected by the drought emergency as severely as other parts of Somalia, the achievements within the the SIRA project played a key role in minimizing the loss of livestock as well as status of food and nutrition insecurity as was attributed by the community members. Unfortunately, this could not be quantified as the FGD participants relied on general comparisons with other communities they knew who did not benefit from the SIRA project. This influenced the evaluation's finding that the SIRA project was relevant both to the context and needs of the beneficiaries.

C. Effectiveness of the SIRA project

The effectiveness of the SIRA project was looked at in line with the evaluation question posed in the terms of reference: **To what extent have expected and unexpected outcomes of capacity development activities and Advocacy interventions been achieved in line or beyond thematic pathways?**

The evaluation found that the project had mixed performance on effectiveness due to the effect of prolonged drought emergency shifting the focus from longer-term resilience to managing the impact of the drought on the affected communities

The following were some of the considerations;

- ✓ Expected change to be contributed by the SIRA project in line with the theory of change
- ✓ Status of achievement of the expected changes
- ✓ Varying importance of the different outcome areas and interventions in contributing to the changes
- ✓ Tracking any unexpected changes resulting from the SIRA project

The SIRA project, as outlined in the theory of change under relevance above designed the interventions and implementation to support local communities, private sector and government to take the responsibility for resilience building actions.

The changes expected from the first outcome of the SIRA project is for producer associations and cooperatives based on informal producer groups – with a conflict sensitivity in approach. This is expected to be the core actors for an enhanced fodder production, productivity and quality. In order to support them, FAO will follow a facilitation approach and closely work with MoLFD's public extension service providers. Extension providers will train the associations/cooperatives in organizational development in a way that ensures women involvement in leadership. Training will incentivize producer organizations to engage in common planning and group savings. Based on producer organizations, public extension services will create, facilitate and train Agro-Pastoral Field Schools (APFS) groups on fodder production. Training will include innovative technologies on fodder production (baling, silaging, use of different resources, etc.). Extension service providers will also initiate linkages between producer organizations, input suppliers (seeds, urea and salt for transformation) and artisanal fabricators of equipment (fodder chopping machines), as well as between local input suppliers and seed multipliers in Togdheer region. In addition, FAO will support producer organizations in establishing infrastructure to store, process and sell quality fodder, thereby adding value to their product. Each association or village will be supported to design and construct a fodder shed and to procure fodder choppers (see above). Cooperatives will receive fodder supply from their member associations. They will construct or rehabilitate a permanent fodder storage, processing (pelleting, blocking, nutrition adding) and marketing structure. In order to promote access to markets and knowledge, the project will organize business-to-business forums between livestock traders, cooperatives, input suppliers, etc. In addition, MoLFD will work with local radio stations so as FSNAU generated market information will be shared. Women have no equal access and control of resources in comparison to men. To facilitate women's access to loans, the project will link women associations to financial service providers.

The programme's central theme of transitioning functions (information, skills development and policy) in the medium and longer term to the government of Somalia and the private sector (including local businesses) will be the anchor strategy for all the interventions. In the medium term, transitioning SWALIM to the Somaliland local institutions seem to be more feasible as compared to FSNAU. However, discussions are ongoing between development partners and FGS on the modality of hand-over of FSNAU responsibilities. SDC is in discussion with FAO on the possibility of having a common steering platform for livestock and fodder value chain programmes in Somalia to create a common approach and replication of the successes of SIRA project in other regions in Somalia and to other SDC supported programmes in the Kenya and Ethiopia. The second outcome envisages the change to be achieved through the contribution to FSNAU and SWALIM with a focus on national institutional capacities building to take-over some of the responsibilities of data collection, analysis and dissemination. Information (on natural vegetation, yields, market prices, importation status, weather predictions, etc.) will inform early warning and early action across Somalia. Specifically in Awdal region, local authorities will support communities to use early warning information to develop common plans for production and for drought response.

To respond to quick onset of shocks/disasters, the programme integrated contingency funds in the annual project budget. Annual estimated USD 100'000, from Switzerland project funds contribution, will be used for interventions that respond to the needs of the worst affected members of the community. The contingency funds have a defined trigger modality; in the case the drought/disaster emergency plans are not triggered, the funds will be utilized to support the fodder value chain interventions. Regular conflict monitoring and analysis for a conflict-sensitive implementation will inform community planning, resource

allocation, and information management. One Thousand and Fifteen (1,015) association members (households) representing 68% of project target beneficiaries were reported to have benefitted from early action assistance due to IPC3 status in Awdal region as part of crisis modification emergency fund integrated within the SIRA programme. This is

The evaluation assessed effectiveness by taking into account the achievement of the changes described above through three levels. These are:

- (level 1) If fodder production and quality enhanced while ensuring market incentives to stimulate compliance and production as well as ensuring outbreak of livestock diseases is contained in a timely manner will contribute to increased household incomes.
- (level 2) If access to markets for fodder producers and traders improved, institution capacity supported and regulatory framework for fodder production and marketing is in place while ensuring open markets which will lead to better sales for producers, traders and provide incentives to other value chain actors to fully engage in the business then household incomes will be increased
- (level 3) If access to timely and reliable information on climate, natural resource, livelihoods food security and nutrition which will culminate to development of community action plans to trigger early action interventions, then risk to people's lives and livelihoods will be reduced. Enhanced knowledge of the target groups including cooperatives/associations, rural women and their communities (on enhanced income), target groups being able to raise their voice, target groups able to engage into a (political) dialogue with government and private sector and the expression of opinion is organized;

In addition to the above three levels, the evaluation considered what the most effective and specific strategies and interventions were and what strategies and interventions were redundant; what enabling factors and/or obstacles were; and how gender and inclusion sensitive the realized outcomes are.

The biggest change that the communities attribute to the SIRA project is the availability of fodder for their livestock as the drought worsened. Eight of the 14 communities engaged through FGDs confirmed availability of the fodder as recent as March 2022 when the drought situation was causing death of livestock. This change is attributed to the ability of the communities to produce between 155 and 1,000 of 25 Kgs bags of fodder, with the one community (Casho Cado in Borama) having sold 120 bags at USD 10 (Somaliland Shillings 85,000) before they decided to store the rest and use on their livestock. Hol Hol community in Borama district managed to produce 1,000 bags of fodder and sold 400 of these bags through their cooperative society while the remaining 600 bags were used to feed livestock during the current drought. It is important to note that, the fodder produced barely lasts the communities until March in the normal annual calendar. The seasonal rains (Gu') that is expected from early April were either not sufficient or not received at all in some of the locations. The year 2020 and early 2021 saw most of the target communities undertake fodder production with a focus on commercialization, but this was quickly adapted, as the drought emergency started unfolding in mid-2021. The evaluation team using information from the FGDs estimated that communities sold between 10% and 40% of their fodder while 60% to 90% was used to feed livestock as the drought situation worsened. This was a classic example of adaptive management by the SIRA project to reflect the changing context and changing needs of the beneficiaries.

The evaluation team did not get to see the fodder market system affected by the drought emergency, but managed to see the various infrastructure and equipment supported by the project. In addition, the evaluation team managed to interact with members of the fodder cooperatives and associations that were established or revived by the project. From this interaction, the communities that were further away from the cooperatives decried the lack of the bigger machinery used to compact and make the livestock feeds, they only received fodder cutting machines and storage facilities[3]. As such, these communities could not favorably compete in the fodder market with the rest who had more equipment to produce better quality

[3] An exchange with the project management team indicated that it was in the design of the programme that only 10 cooperatives (aggregate associations) were planned to receive block making machine and superior equipment.

fodder. Both Abu Qays and Casho Cado communities decried that at times over 400 households converge to use one equipment; a situation that results in a slow pace before all the members can access the equipment for fodder processing.

All the communities engaged during the evaluation confirmed access to relevant early warning information through mobile short messages and that each community had undertaken a community action plan development to improve their mitigation and preparedness capacities to the shocks. The community members engaged through the household survey could clearly articulate the risks they encounter as well as coping mechanisms as described under the relevance section above in this report. In addition, despite the communities in Baki and Borama districts regularly receiving early warning information, this was not the case for all communities across Somalia. Where through civil society organizations supported mechanism, the communities received FSNAU and SWALIM information. Overall, the information was largely accessible to professionals and not necessarily the end user at the community level. This is attributed to the packaging of the information and the medium used, that are not effective to be accessed by the rural communities.

At the federal level, FSNAU and SWALIM engaged in generation of relevant early warning information and embarked on systems strengthening for the adoption of these systems by the government institutions. Since the start of the project, 292 government officials have participated in the seasonal assessments that generate early information. FSNAU regularly assessed 71 markets in the region in collecting relevant market information that was disseminated. In the spirit of ensuring institutionalization of the early warning information, the University of Hargeisa and Puntland State University were linked with a University in Belgium to establish relevant courses that could be accessed by government officials. The University of Hargeisa has since established an early warning and disaster management course that was approved by the University senate. The FSNAU data at national level has been used to develop the National Development Plan, the National Humanitarian Plan and the National Development Strategy. Despite these, efforts, there were various challenges encountered in getting the adoption of the systems by the government, with the lengthy government transition being a major challenge.

From the perspective of the federal government agencies, there has been a huge reliance on FSNAU data in making decisions as reported by the Ministry of Livestock and Rangelands Development .The SWALIM support was considered less predictable at the federal level. The federal government had concerns regarding the move towards sustainability, where they felt that the speed of progress for ownership of the early warning systems was slow and as the first phase of the project ends, they are neither well equipped nor prepared to take up this role from FSNAU and SWALIM. A follow up with SDC on the project design indicated that the programme is a three phased and that handover of responsibility was expected to be done incrementally through a period of 9 years. However, directive from the Ministry of planning and International Development of the Federal Government of Somalia, has seen the transfer plan of FSNAU and SWALIM from FAO to the Somalia National Bureau of Statistics (SNBS) in the first phase of SIRA. A three-phased plan (estimated to be about 3-year period) has been agreed between FAO and the Ministry to transfer the responsibility.

Despite the positive changes that were acquired through the qualitative data collection, the quantitative data pointed to the negative impact of the drought emergency on the target population. The evaluation team acknowledges that the primary data was collected at a time the programme target locations are categorized to be in the IPC 3 (crisis) and IPC 4 (emergency) of the food security classification.

The evaluation determined that the surveyed population were poor, with few assets, low levels of education, and limited access to technology and other resources required for improved livelihoods. This was observed through the poverty probability index (PPI). PPI is a poverty measurement tool that assesses the likelihood of a household being below the poverty line using 10 questions about household characteristics and asset ownership. As part of the evaluation, households responded to 10 PPI indicators. Scores were calculated based on the scorecard, and the probability of a household living below the poverty

line was subsequently determined using the PPI Look-Up Table. The analysis used the June 2015 version of the PPI scorecard, lookup tables, and a $1.90/day 2011 PPI poverty line. The results show that 63.1% of the household survey respondents had a poverty probability of 92.5%, 23.4% had a poverty probability of 81.1% and 11.1% had a poverty probability of 68.3%, based on the PPI index.

In addition, 94% of the household survey respondents confirmed having had only one or two meals the day before the primary data collection, with 42% having had only one meal in the same period while 1% did not have any meals. In addition, looking at the level of food and nutrition insecurity, 39% of the respondents had anxiety in the four weeks prior to data collection that they would not have enough to eat, while 46% confirmed that household members ate foods they did not prefer over the same four weeks period. Keeping on the food insecurity, 44% of the respondents confirmed eating a limited variety of food while 45% ate smaller portion of meals due to lack of resources or food unavailability. Based on the household food insecurity access scale, only 36% of the respondents could be classified as food secure, while 56% are severely food insecure as shown in the table below.

Table 4: Household Food Insecurity Access: Category & Prevalence

Category	N	%
Food Secure	12	36%
Mildly Food Secure	6	2%
Moderately Food Insecure	20	6%
Severely Food Insecure	187	56%

In addition to food insecurity access, the evaluation looked at food consumption score and household dietary diversity to inform the state of food security. This was assessed by looking at the percentage of households with poor, borderline, and adequate Food Consumption Scores (FCS) as per USAID's Food for Peace Indicators for Emergency Program Performance Indicator Reference Sheets, February 2019. Household food consumption status is determined based on the following thresholds: 0-21: Poor; 21.5-35: Borderline; >35: Acceptable. The study results show all households in the targeted locations had poor food consumption scores (mean=7.2) using the threshold as shown in Table 17 below. There is a wide gap to cross for households to attain borderline FCS.

Table 5: Food Consumption Score

Location	N	%	FCS mean
Baki	159	15%	6.81
Borama	178	18%	7.59

The information gathered to develop the FCS, based on a 7-day recall, provides a snapshot of different food groups consumed by households. In the surveyed household the main foods consumed 7 days prior to the survey were staple foods (67%), vegetables (36%), fruits(6%), meat(36%), pulses(7%), dairy (44%) and oils(42%). The least consumed food groups were fruits and pulses.
Less than half of surveyed households consumed more than 5 food groups in the 7-day period.

Table 6: Food Groups by Consumption Days

	Food Group							
Days Eaten in the Last Week	**Main**	**Vegetables**	**Pulses**	**Oils**	**Dairy**	**Meat/Fish**	**Fruits**	
Average	227	122	24	143	147	120	20	

Notably, the results established that around 15% (53 households) had nothing to eat in the last 7 days. Further analysis shows that of the 53 households who reported not to have consumed any of the food groups, 42% were female. 94% of them had attained only primary education,77% were married or living

together in a union with two or more wives, 58% of them do not own any livestock and 94% had no cash savings.

In addition to changes in relation to food security, the evaluation looked at income levels in line with the theory of change. A majority (80.7%) of the respondents confirmed having a source of income over the 30 days prior to the data collection with 76% having at least one sustainable source of income. For those who reported income from fodder (9%), sale of milk (32%) and average for all respondents from sale of livestock (23%) was calculated to be USD 1,349 per year. When this is limited to only sale of fodder and milk to create a causal linkage between increased fodder production and relationship with household income from direct fodder sales and milk availability, the annual household income is USD 1,206 compared to the baseline value of total average household income of USD 1,173. This means that the baseline consolidated all sources of income, while the end line evaluation zeroed in on sources of income directly relatable to fodder production. Even though there is a reported increase in household income, this is further undermined by the prolonged drought emergency of depressed rainfall season that has hampered fodder production for the best part of the SIRA phase one implementation period.

Table 7: Source of income

Source of income	Number of households earning from each type of livelihood activity	% of total respondents	Mean (USD)
Fodder	31	9%	68.8
Selling livestock	79	23%	51.8
Selling milk	106	32%	31.7
Firewood collection and sale	11	3%	43.2
Selling Charcoal	11	3%	20.9
Selling crops	23	6.8%	61.4
Water collection and sale	9	2.7%	22.8
Selling fish	4	1.2%	105.5

Despite a large number of the population having a regular source of income, only 10% of the respondents reported having any savings even though 28% of the respondents belong to at least one savings and lending group.

Another change attributed to the SIRA project is the buildup of social capital with 22% of the respondents reporting that they can borrow from the fodder associations compared to 0% in the baseline as shown in the table below. At least 44% of female respondents and 46% of male respondents belong to a fodder association while 50% female and 39% male respondents belong to a fodder cooperative, which are directly attributed to establishment of the group dynamics in fodder associations, and cooperatives through the interventions of the SIRA project.

Table 8: Household source of credit

Households borrowing if they have no enough money	Female	Male	Total	N
Fodder association	23%	20%	22%	73
Fodder cooperatives	5%	1%	3%	10
Family member	4%	6%	5%	17
Bank	0%	2%	1%	4
Microfinance	1%	0%	0%	1
Money lender	0%	1%	1%	2
NGO or project	1%	0%	0%	1
Other	3%	1%	2%	6

Savings and credit group	0%	1%	0%	1
I do not buy it	63%	68%	66%	222
Total	100%	100%	100%	337

This is further evidenced by looking at the social capital where 79% of the respondents felt that members of their household could rely on relatives living in the community for food during difficult times while 74% could rely on relatives away from their community. This is shown in the table below.

Table 9: Index of Social Capital at Household Level

Bonding Social Capital	N	%
Will non-relatives living in your community be able to lean on you for financial or food support during their difficult times?	121	37%
Will your household be able to lean on non-relatives living in your community for financial or food support during difficult time?	154	47%
Will relatives living in your community be able to lean on you for financial or food support during their difficult times?	216	66%
Will your household be able to lean on relatives living in your community for financial or food support during difficult times?	258	79%
Bridging Social Capital	N	%
Will your household be able to lean on non-relatives living outside your community for financial or food support during difficult time?	75	23%
Will relatives living outside your community be able to lean on you for financial or food support during their difficult times?	190	58%
Will your household be able to lean on relatives living outside your community for financial or food support during difficult time?	242	74%

D. Gender Dynamics in the SIRA project

Women engagement was at the heart of the fodder production and fodder value chain development. This included both inclusion of women as beneficiaries as well as women in the 10 cooperatives that were formed by the project. In most cases, the evaluation found that women constituted between 25% and 30% of the cooperative and association leadership. To understand the gender dynamics of the SIRA project, the evaluation sought to assess the level of decision-making and ownership of resources in relation to the project interventions. To achieve this, the survey collected indicators on gender roles and decision-making practices as related to buying food for the household, self-earned cash, income generated from livestock, and income from crop farming.

The SIRA project aimed at increasing the household income and money at the household level can provide a pathway to women's empowerment and gender equality. As women gain access to greater income, their household financial contribution increases, potentially resulting in increased household decision-making authority. In a variety of country contexts, women's control over earned income, or household spending, is associated with expenditure and consumption patterns that tend to favor children, such as increased spending on health care, childcare, and children's clothing and education.[4]

A significant majority of women (93%) interviewed during the household survey participated in fodder and crop production compared to 91% of the male respondents. Despite the large level of participation in fodder production, only 38% of women felt they influenced decisions around fodder production as shown in the table below.

[4] Quisumbing, Agnes R., and John A. Maluccio. 2000. Intra-household allocation and gender relations: New empirical evidence from four developing countries

Table 10: Fodder production activities

Did you contribute to decision making in fodder production over the past 12 months?	N (327)	%
No	209	62%
Yes	128	38%
How much input did you have in Fodder production activities?		
Input into all or most decisions	8	6%
Input into some decisions	89	70%
Input into very few decisions	6	5%
No input or input into very few decisions	35	19%
Women's input into Fodder production activities	16%	

Despite the heavy involvement in fodder production, only 14% of the household survey respondents felt that women participate in livestock production decision making, this is similar to participation by women in non-farming economic activities.

The SIRA project was reported in the FGDs to have created employment opportunities at the community level. The evaluation found that only 33% of the women access and participate in the wage labour employment opportunities created by the fodder production and processing at community level as shown in the table below. Only 9% of women participate in making decisions at the household level in relation to major expenditure decisions.

Table 11: Wage and salary employment activities

Did you yourself participate in wage and salary employment activities in the past 12 months?	N (327)	%
No	225	67%
Yes	112	33%
How much input did you have in decisions on the non-farming economic activities?		
Input into all or most decisions	12	11%
Input into some decisions	88	80%
Input into very few decisions	4	3%
No input or input into very few decisions	8	6%
Women's input into Wage and salary employment activities	94%	

E. Efficiency of the SIRA project

The evaluation assessed efficiency by responding to the question: **What has the programme done to ensure a proper use of available/limited resources?**

In addressing the efficiency question, the evaluation defined efficiency further into the following categories:

- **Time efficiency** looking at how well the project work plan and schedule was adhered to and where there were adaptations made for better results based on the changing context.
- **Operational efficiency** looking at how well the implementation strategies contributed to better use of the resources.
- **Collaboration efficiency** which is how best the project was coordinated and leveraged other ongoing investments in the same area to achieve better results.
- **Economic efficiency** looking at utilization of financial resources of the project in relation to the commitments made.

Time efficiency: The SIRA project was approved to run from 1 December 2019 to 30 November 2022 with a total sub-granted budget of CHF 6,080,000 for this period. The three-year resilience-building project is taking place in the midst of the worst drought emergency in the region, with almost a half of the project duration falling into the drought emergency period. As elaborated under both relevance and effectiveness above, the drought emergency has emerged as a significant risk to the project, surpassing the level of risk under the risk and assumptions during the project design. Despite all these challenges, the SIRA project managed to undertake the planned activities under both outcome areas, despite not fully achieving the level of change envisioned in the project. Substantial time has also been lost during the Covid-19 pandemic related travel and operations restrictions for both the FAO and local ministry of agriculture and livestock teams based in Hargeisa. This delay was worst during the height of pandemic where there was total lock down at different times. The team took the risk of programme implementation despite the limited travel allowed in the subsequent period after the lock down rules were relaxed. Most of the meetings at the national and subnational levels were carried out virtually including the programme steering committee meetings. The cost savings from the travel restrictions were reprogrammed to enhance programme investments such as the fodder storage centers were enhanced to include fencing and toilet facilities.

Operational efficiency: A link is established between programme effects and the costs incurred. The evaluators followed the IOB criteria on efficiency, which are mainly qualitative. It is unlikely that a level 2 analysis, that compares efficiency of the entire programme with alternative options or benchmarks, will be feasible because of limited availability of comparative data and of time and resource limitations within this evaluation. However, we propose to carry out a multi-criteria analysis on efficiency of different programme interventions that will shed a light on the perceived efficiency of different process approaches used by the programme in a comparative cost-effectiveness assessment. Even though the project objective of increasing household income may not be fully achieved because of reduced production of fodder, there is a non-quantifiable element in safeguarding household entitlement during the drought. Therefore, the prolonged drought emergency played a key role in influencing the adaptation of the first outcome around fodder production, where the project and target communities opted to use the fodder to save their livestock rather than selling the fodder as planned in the project. This influenced the level of income and food security of the target households negatively while at the same time playing a key role in the survival of the beneficiaries' livestock despite the drought emergency.

The evaluation collected evidence on measures and procedures taken by the programme management (at the leading organization level (FAO) and the level of country offices) to address the efficiency question and optimize use of available resources. Specific feature of this programme is the presence of FAO country offices in Hargeisa and the presence of the programme implementing officers and frequent visits to Baki and Borama districts bringing a close link between the beneficiaries and the implementer. The programme implementation committee and Programme steering committee are structures aimed at enhancing the quality of implementation and providing advice for adaptive programme. SDC together with other key stakeholders (at national and Somaliland level) participate in the respective programme steering meetings. Various adaptation decisions have been made during phase implementation.

Collaboration efficiency was achieved primarily by engaging various stakeholders quite seamlessly in the delivery of the SIRA project. This was seen through achievement of national and Awdal regional level successes by the project as outlined under both relevance and effectiveness sections of this report. The project implementation committee and project steering committee ensured the different partners operated as one unit in the delivery of the project outcomes.

Economic efficiency, the evaluation established that the project was guided by organizational financial management and procurement procedures and standards. Key informant interviews with FAO staff revealed that supply of items and services was guided by competitive bidding in line with procurement policy. Moreover, the delivery of project interventions met quality standards. Economic efficiency also seeks to address resource leveraging and timeliness of implementation. In order to leverage resources, the project benefited from existing government and community structures to deliver interventions. For instance, the project used Ministry of Livestock staff to deliver training. The training were mostly community based hence low cost and efficient.

F. Sustainability of the SIRA project results

The evaluation assessed sustainability by answering the question: **To what degree are the changes with regard to capacity development and with regard to increased income and resilience outcomes sustainable?**

The evaluation looked at sustainability at two levels as elaborated both in the overall objectives of SIRA project and in the ToR. Sustainability of the changes in capacity of partners and rural women and their communities – the latter is critical to assess lasting power of community engagement(rural women and their communities) in influencing policies and their implementation; and sustainability of the changes in agenda, policies and practices of government and private sector.

The extent to which changes can or will be sustained is in principle related to ability of key actors to consolidate over time what has been achieved in terms of capacity development or in policy development and implementation. Therefore, the assessment of sustainability will be focused on actor-groups, notably government actors, private actors, civil society and citizen's groups (rural women and their communities).

Where applicable for the above-mentioned groups, sustainability will be assessed along different dimensions such social, institutional, and financial. In addition, it will be assessed what factors may affect sustainability. A specific question will refer to the existence of exit-strategies.

A specific feature of the SIRA project is the fact that several SIRA interventions are aligned to on-going programmes that are/were being implemented by the partners in the various thematic domains of the JRA. The main question is whether the linkages with these programmes or other programmes enhance sustainability of the SIRA interventions.

Based on the above definition and understanding of sustainability by the project, the evaluation found the project to be sustainable for the following reasons:

The various stakeholders and community members engaged during the evaluation acknowledged and lauded the extensive consultation that took place at the initial stages of the project which enhanced buy in both by stakeholders and the target communities. This saw the stakeholders take appropriate time in designing the project interventions with a longer term thinking that is expected to go well beyond the project period.

The target communities that were engaged by the evaluation team denoted the excitement that fodder production provided both as a source of income but more so as a source of feeds for the livestock as the drought worsened. All the communities engaged mentioned that more members from the communities joined the fodder production and harvesting once they realized the benefit it had in the wake of the drought emergency. All showed willingness and readiness to resume and expand fodder production once the drought emergency is over.

Despite the enthusiasm on the sustainability of the project, both stakeholders and the communities elaborated on the need for further investment especially on water infrastructure to reduce the reliance on erratic rainfall. The cost of the machinery and equipment for effective fodder production was also considered prohibitive and required longer term and elaborate thinking in sustainably addressing. This

calls for better coordination with other programmes in the areas as well as advocacy to the federal and regional government to put in place resources that can help address these infrastructural needs.

The evaluation established that the project design focused on long-term elements which are expected to yield changes that will outlive the project. For instance, the emphasis on capacity strengthening of the field extension workers as part of the governance system, particularly the government supported community strategy is likely to yield long-term impact. Similarly, the early warning system focused on building the capacities of various government institutions to enhance uptake by the government agencies. While it is clearly the desire of many respondents interviewed to see a transition from relief (emergency) to recovery, there appears to be quite some work to do in this area. Key Informant interviews with project staff and partners involved in the project implementation revealed that the government has not allocated budget to continue with the project interventions. In order to address the need to phase out of relief (emergency) into recovery, the project is linked with JIRA existing programs including food income and markets as well as community empowerment. This will ensure that the long term development elements of the project particularly related to food security and income continue to be addressed beyond the emergency nutrition project.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Conclusions and general recommendations from the evaluation

The findings of the evaluation suggest that the project is relevant to the context, timing and needs of the target population. The project has mixed results on its effectiveness primarily due to the prolonged impact of the horn of Africa drought emergency that has played a key role in reversing gains made. Despite this, there are still positive resilience impact that were visible amongst the communities as Somalia risks going into famine. The project has attained progress in women engagement but needs to do more in relation to women empowerment and decision making at both the community and household level. The project has been accepted and owned by the beneficiaries thus showing early signs of sustainability. However, the timing that has seen almost 50% of the project duration during the drought emergency, there is a need to scale up the project duration and resources to support communities withstanding the increasingly frequent and recurrent shocks.

There are various recommendations highlighted in the findings section of the report and summed up here.

- ✓ The fodder processing equipment entailed the construction of storage facilities in each of the target community, provision of fodder cutters to each of the target community and provision of fodder processing machinery to 10-fodder cooperative society.
- ✓ The SIRA project supported fodder production but did not provide adequate investment in water supply, which was seen as a limitation by the communities both on the volumes of fodder produced and the duration in which fodder could be produced.
- ✓ The communities were involved in the development of the Community Action Plans as part of improving disaster mitigation and preparedness. All communities reported minimal or non-existent investment by the government to support implementation of the gaps identified in the community plans.

B. Recommendations that can inform SIRA Phase 2

- ✓ The communities, who were located longer distances from the location of the cooperative managed equipment, felt that such equipment could also have been distributed to be shared between two neighboring communities as the 10 processing machineries were inadequate and denied the communities the opportunity to produce and process more fodder. The access to the fodder storage and value addition centers and the aggregation of the fodder for value addition could be reviewed with the communities in the next phase planning.
- ✓ It is recommended that future phases of the SIRA project considers inclusion of fodder associations and cooperatives level grants aimed at motivating the communities to implement the priorities outlined in the community action plans
- ✓ It is recommended that the second phase of the project take into account the need to increase access to water supply for fodder production to ensure continued production even during drought emergencies.
- ✓ As elaborated under the relevance section, regularity of fodder production by the communities can play a significant role in attaining resilience. The regularity of production was limited by lack of sustainable and permanent sources of water for the fodder production.
- ✓ The federal government departments were not expected to be at the design phase of the project, but considering them as key stakeholders with relevant information during the evaluation, it is recommended that even if they will not directly benefit from resource allocation by the project, they be involved as relevant stakeholders. A good example is that the federal ministry of livestock and rangelands development is developing a federal fodder production strategy and policy that could have benefitted from the lessons learnt by the project as well as offering an opportunity to achieve results at scale through replication of the project adopted strategies.

- ✓ To foster sustainability and uptake by government, the project needs to support development of relevant manuals that can facilitate retention of knowledge and skills especially by the technical extension officers.
- ✓ The SIRA project needs to invest in community empowerment and attitude change approaches using various gender transformative approaches that are appropriate in this context. These include women specific investment actions and expanding financial inclusion of women within existing financial systems. The project risks in the medium and long term in improving household income and at the same time disempowering women inadvertently.
- ✓ Women decision making can be enhanced if there is increased investment in women roles within the livestock production section. Possible entry points could be increased inclusion of milk marketing and trade in small livestock (goats and sheep).
- ✓ The early warning system is considered effective in generation of relevant and timely information, but for a more effective impact of this information, there is a need to develop contextually appropriate mechanisms to disseminate this information to communities across the country.
- ✓ The federal level ministries and more so the Somalia National Bureau of Statistics has benefitted from the project, but still a lot more needs to be done for the effective uptake of dissemination of early warning information. Investments required include increasing the relevant capacity development of knowledge and skills of the staff, providing relevant equipment that will enable generated and dissemination of the data and developing a clear roadmap of the federal ministries taking up these roles. In addition, advocacy is required to the federal government to advocate for public resource allocation towards this venture by the federal government
- ✓ The drought emergency that was prolonged reversed some of the positive gains made through the SIRA project. Considering drought and other climatic and economic shocks are expected to be more regular in future, the programme design could adopt a full-spectrum approach where more resources are allocated towards protecting the gains made from being eroded by disasters.