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DEUTSCHE HUMANITÄRE HILFE

MID- TERM EVALUATION REPORT

MAY 2019



**IMPROVED ACCESS TO SANITATION,
DRINKING WATER AND SHELTER FOR
RETURNEES AND IDPS IN NANGARHAR,
AFGHANISTAN**



Summary

Brief description of the project and its framework conditions

In September 2018 Welthungerhilfe (WHH) Afghanistan started an emergency project named ***Improved Access to Sanitation, Drinking Water and Shelter for Returnees and IDPs in Nangarhar, Afghanistan***, which lies in the eastern region. There is a great need for humanitarian aid in Nangarhar Province, especially in the districts of Jalalabad City, Behsood and Surkhrod. In fact, it was prioritised by the 2018–2021 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) because it had one of the highest numbers of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the country. Estimates suggested that one million IDPs and returnees were living in informal settlements and that the security situation was concerning. The project aims to provide support to the most vulnerable of IDPs, returnees and host communities, especially in the important sectors of WASH, shelter, and multi-purpose cash.

This mid-term evaluation (MTE) assesses the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, connectedness, coordination, coverage of cross-cutting issues, gender mainstreaming, and impact of project 1199. It analyses the reasons for the success and failure of the planned results and activities, gathered lessons learned, and makes recommendations for the remaining period of the project as well for future programs and projects. The MTE had three main phases: preparatory (inception), fieldwork, and reporting, which included the analysis of information. The data collection and analysis tools selected were based on key evaluation criteria identified by the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP). The MTE employed a participatory methodology which included focus group discussions (FGDs), individual interviews, and survey and stakeholder consultations. Before beginning the field phase, the evaluators met with staff at WHH county and regional office.

A summary of the key findings of the evaluation, including the lessons learnt, and recommendations for its improvement, is below.

Relevance

The project is highly relevant for addressing the core problems that vulnerable people, primarily IDPs and returnees and host community, face, and the districts selected—Behsood, Surkhrod and Jalalabad city—are appropriate. The project design was appropriate and the program is in line with the priorities and strategic intervention areas of the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GoIRA): the integration of returnees and IDPs, shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene¹. The MTE noted that all the project's components and activities fit well with the Humanitarian Response Plan (2018–2021)² for Afghanistan and that the project's indicators and targets contribute to achieving the target and outcomes of that HRP. The project

¹<https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-emergency-shelter-and-nfis-strategy-2017>

² Humanitarian Response Plan (2018 – 2021) emphasizes on Education in emergencies Emergency shelter & non-food items Food security & agriculture Health Nutrition Protection Water, sanitation & hygiene including Multi-purpose cash assistance

was designed to incorporate the result of the situation analysis and to address the actual needs of the communities it served. It was also highly relevant to the WHH's multi-annual country program (2017–2021) for Afghanistan. There was no overlapping or duplication.

Effectiveness

Project 1199 has well-developed annual and quarterly financial plans, including a liquidity plan for implementing activities and projections of the remaining project period, and followed them closely. The results showed that the project worked well. Appropriate targeting and the selection of appropriate activities had a positive impact on the targeted communities, especially in terms of integrating IDPs and returnees into host communities. To achieve Output 2, the project followed a self-help approach: it formed operation-and-maintenance (O&M) committees. For most activities, including the construction of shelters, latrines, solar pipe schemes, and wells, the project is on right track. It has made significant progress and is on its way to achieve its targets.

The project team developed precise activity plans, monitored on a regular basis, and reported on its activities and submitted them to its donors in a timely manner. The program team participated in regular meetings with the Department of Refugees and Returnees (DoRR), the Directorate of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (DoRRD), other government agencies, Emergency Shelter Non-Food Items (ESNFI), and the food security and agriculture cluster (FSAC) and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) clusters.

Beneficiaries are highly satisfied with all three results' components of the program—shelter, WASH (especially the kits and construction materials provided) and cash payments made as multipurpose cash grants. Government line departments appreciated on the project's smooth implementation, the good quality of materials it used, and its efforts at coordinating with government. The evaluators noted that the capacity-building activities conducted under the outputs were effective. The beneficiaries reported that they did, in fact, utilize the knowledge they accrued during hygiene training. The SFAC cluster at the regional and national level appreciated the WHH's contribution and its active role in the cluster.

Efficiency

With its approximate budget of 1,138,000 euros, the project directly benefited about 15,000 individuals, meaning it cost 75.86 euros per person. This is a reasonable expenditure because the project constructed new shelters and latrines and upgraded old shelters. The analysis of the budget ratio indicates that expenditure on relief goods, materials and services comprised 72.17% of total budget, 16.67% allocated on staff, 2.03% on development, 4.41% on other expenses and 4.49% on indirect cost. The MTE found this allocation reasonable.

It is difficult to estimate the cost-performance ratio for individual measures as all measures complemented each other and outcomes were achieved by their synergy. That said, costs did seem reasonable given the project's achievements. For example, the cost of a hygiene kit (€ 20) and the per capita cost of training (€ 6 per capita) are very reasonable given the current context in Afghanistan. This calculation of the per-unit cost of training and kits showed that the project is being implemented in a cost-efficient manner.

Adequate resources, including equipment, vehicles, and operating funds were made available throughout the implementation period. The timely release of funds from the country office also supported the efficient implementation of the project. The WHH was appreciated and

recognized by government line departments as a key organization in the efficient delivery of services.

Outcomes and impacts

It is too early to speculate about the wide impacts Project 1199 could have on the communities targeted, but the evaluators did note some positive outcomes which ought to contribute to the achievement of the overall project objectives. One substantial economic outcome of the project is that the 500 highly vulnerable beneficiaries who were given multipurpose cash grants were able to pay their rent with that money and thus had more leftover to fulfill other urgent needs. Awareness about personal hygiene and sanitation increased after the beneficiaries participated in training. The beneficiaries believed that illness due to water-borne disease has drastically decreased compared to the past as they have been maintaining good personal hygiene and sanitation. The evaluators also noted that the prevalence of open defecation decline in the targeted communities. This change will likely to generate a positive environmental impact.

The participation of NGOs in the FSAC cluster increased and the capacity of NGOs was built at the regional level.

Sustainability and connectedness

The MTE noted that government has assumed ownership of project activities and that it monitored the project activity regularly. Its keen participation suggests that project activities will be sustainable. Legal issues were made clear at the outset of shelter construction, and beneficiaries will receive certificate when their shelters are complete, a measure which will contribute to achieve the sustainability. The creation of O&M committees responsible for looking after solar pipe scheme will ensure the sustainability of the project's efforts. Another important piece of evidence of sustainability is the fact that the project upheld cluster standards in the construction of shelters and secured the cluster's approval of engineering designs. The fact that the government was involved in negotiations with the boring company who was involved in the solar pipe schemes should guarantee the sustainability of those schemes after the completion of project.

Coordination

Project 1199 coordinated well with all government line departments to avoid the duplication of activities. The mechanism the WHH regional office used in the eastern region was very effective in strengthening the coordination mechanism with government line departments, district governor offices, DDAs, CDCs, etc. The formation of a project appraisal committee (PAC) to approve all project activities, including sketches and BoQs for various activities, prior to their implementation, was very effective.

Coverage

The geographical coverage and social targeting of the project are appropriate. During 2015 and 2016, the districts of Beshud, Shurkohod and Jalalabad city had extremely high inflows of returnees and IDPs and, as a result, the host communities became overcrowded. The activities implemented by Project 1199 do not overlap with and are not duplicated by other humanitarian agency activities. The social targeting that the project practiced was highly relevant at the time of implementation. The project adopted an inclusive approach in its

selection of interventions and focused on the needs of the host communities in all project components.

Cross-cutting themes

Project 1199 adopted a gender-sensitive approach in order to maximize women's participation in each result. Good evidence that women were involved in project activities lies in the results achieved. For example, women were trained and provided hygiene kits.

Important recommendations

1. There was no evidence of any planned exit strategy for the program at the time of the MTE. The MTE recommends that, in the next six months, the project prepare an exit strategy for solar pipe and shelter construction and Output 3.
2. The financial plan and financial projection for the remaining period of the project shows there will be some unspent budget when Project 1199 comes to an end. The MTE recommends that the project calculate the cost per shelter construction and, in coordination with the DoRR, plan to build an additional number of shelters. The project must initiate this action as soon as possible.
3. For the smooth completion of the project, no cost extension for 3–4-month extension is recommended
4. WHH has assigned full-time national staff to the national FSAC cluster, the MTE recommends adding one staff member to spend at least 75% of his or her time at the regional level FSAC would add value to the project's objective of the building capacity of NGOs at the regional level.
5. WHH has been contributing in the FSAC activities at both national and eastern region and is well appreciated for its role in the cluster. With one of the outcome of the Project 1199 as contributing to enhance the FSAC cluster, the MTE recommends WHH to continue as NGO co-chair at regional level and national level.
6. An outcome-level survey should be conducted before the project comes to an end as it will help the project evaluate its achievement and non-achievement of the project's outcome-level indicators.

General conclusions and lessons learnt

1. The project was appropriately conceptualised and designed based on the ground reality and the needs of the targeted people. It was well planned and was mostly well executed.
2. The social targeting opted for was relevant at the time of implementation. Project 1199 adopted an inclusive approach to selecting interventions. The project also focused on the needs of host communities,
3. Having an PAC which has to approve all project activities prior to their implementation is an appropriate mechanism to strengthen coordination with government line departments and communities as well as to avoid the duplication of activities. Because they were members of the PAC, government line departments assumed full ownership of project activities.
4. Project 1199 successfully achieved some activities and outputs as set out in the project log-frame and is on the road toward achieving the rest.

5. Identifying land suitable for each solar pipe scheme was difficult. The project focuses on public land and if there was no such land then the project had to negotiate with villagers to provide a plot of land with the area 16 m x 15 m. This process took some time and was a bit challenging in the beginning. However, after intensive negotiations, the problem was solved with no conflict.
6. It was easy to find construction materials that fit the specifications for new shelters, but finding materials for upgrading posed a problem.