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WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME KENYA

INFOBRIEF [No. 30]

JANUARY 2019

WAJIR COUNTY

WFP Support to Wajir County's Emergency Preparedness and Response

November 2017–June 2018

Emergency preparedness and response programmes are now a shared function between Wajir County Government and the national government. As recognized and supported by the county government, the role of the World Food Programme (WFP) within the county is changing: from providing direct food assistance and implementing social protection programmes to advising and supporting the government to build its own institutional, legal and programme framework to implement safety net programmes. This infobrief highlights achievements made in strengthening Wajir County capacity through the partnership with WFP from November 2017 to June 2018.



Representatives from the Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth held discussions with farmers in Abdiwako. WFP interventions are aimed at diversifying livelihoods and increasing resilience to drought.

In brief...

- WFP and Wajir County Government undertook a technical review of the joint project “*Enhancing Complementarity and Strengthening Capacity for Sustainable Resilience Building in Kenya’s ASALs 2015–2018*”. The findings and recommendations, which will inform further WFP capacity strengthening initiatives in targeted counties, were disseminated to officers from the national and county governments and NGO partners.
- Wajir County Government successfully finalized its second-generation county integrated development plan (2018–2022), which outlines county development priorities and provides a basis for budget appropriation and development.
- Wajir County Government improved its knowledge of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, including effective strategies and mechanisms for integrating gender perspectives into county disaster risk reduction policies and legislation.
- Wajir County Government participated in a forum for International Women’s Day 2018, “*Time is Now: Rural and Urban Activists Transforming Women’s Lives*”. The event promoted cross learning on women’s empowerment and enhanced linkages amongst county-based leaders, local civil societies and gender specialists from different sectors.
- The Wajir County legal officer participated in training on adopting a gender perspective in legislation and policy development. The skills and knowledge acquired will assist in mainstreaming gender in all the policies and related legislation developed in Wajir County.
- WFP has supported Wajir County Government technically in decentralizing county food and nutrition security assessments and specifically through building the capacity of county officers with skills and knowledge to conduct these assessments.
- A county information officer gained knowledge of the early warning indicators used in the Kenya Drought Early Warning System and how to integrate these into the monthly early warning bulletins produced by the National Drought Management Authority.
- WFP also supported the county government to improve its knowledge of early warning

information in terms of data collection and information dissemination, use of geographical information systems and agro-climatic data in food security analysis.

- Wajir County joined the Kenya Food Security Steering Group to review the food and nutrition security assessment methodology and tools, including approaches used in the analysis. The updated methodology and tools will be used during the 2018 Long Rains Assessment and subsequent assessments.
- As WFP transitions to the Country Strategic Plan, several consultative meetings were held with Wajir County leadership and stakeholders to disseminate the new plan.
- WFP and Wajir County Government reviewed and validated the Food Assistance for Assets manual to strengthen implementation of resilience-building activities in Wajir County.
- County government staff from information communications technology, gender and social services undertook a joint scoping

and assessment of county social protection systems. They participated in a workshop to validate crucial inputs required for the design and development of a county social protection management information system.

Emergency preparedness and response

Review of WFP supported project *'Enhancing Complementarity and Strengthening Capacity for Sustainable Resilience Building in Kenya's Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (2015– 2018)*

In November 2017, WFP commissioned an independent review of the multi-year *"Enhancing Complementarity and Strengthening Capacity for Sustainable Resilience Building in Kenya's Arid and Semi-Arid Lands"* project. The project objectives are to "Strengthen the capacity of government and communities to establish, manage and scale up sustainable, effective and equitable food security and nutrition institutions, infrastructure and safety net systems, including systems linked to

local agricultural supply chains". In Wajir County, this work focused specifically on i) leading and coordinating a disaster risk management unit ii) managing county humanitarian supply chains iii) planning, budgeting and mobilizing resources for effective disaster risk management, and iv) enhancing resilience to shocks strengthening asset creation activities and transitioning responsibility to the Government.

The review objectives were to assess and report on i) the results achieved by the project between January 2015 and June 2017, and ii) the effectiveness of the approach WFP had adopted to realize these objectives. In Wajir County, the review team held discussions with the project beneficiaries, county technical teams and county leadership.

The review's recommendations were disseminated in May, where the Director for Disaster and Humanitarian coordination, the Director for Gender and Social Services, the Deputy Director of Agriculture and the NDMA County Drought Coordinator represented Wajir County. The review's recommendations will inform further WFP capacity strengthening initiatives in targeted counties. These include facilitating county government participation in the national policy process around social protection financing, strengthening linkages between social protection and resilience programmes for disaster risk management and facilitating counties to establish their respective disaster risk management directorates, including developing medium-term strategies to staff and resource the directorates and operationalize core roles.



Small-scale irrigation projects in Qara, Wajir West. WFP provided hybrid irrigation infrastructure consisting of solar systems and pump sets to convey water to farms.

Summary of findings for Wajir County of “A Review of WFP’s Capacity Strengthening Activities under the Project ‘Enhancing Complementarity and Strengthening Capacity for Sustainable Resilience Building in Kenya’s Arid and Semi-Arid Lands’”

In Wajir County the review team found:

- A disaster risk management policy and implementation framework developed with support from Oxfam and a 2014 disaster act were already in place. These policy documents will enable the county to establish a county emergency fund.
- The Disaster and Humanitarian Coordination Directorate had already been established.
- Wajir County has an extremely good working relationship with NDMA and NGOs and strong multi-stakeholder coordination through the county steering group. The county shows a greater use of early warning data in the development of emergency response plans.
- Wajir County Government has taken the lead in supporting 28,000 food-insecure beneficiaries through the resilience-building programme. The county government committed to covering over 50 percent of the whole resilience-building budget in the county.

Wajir County Integrated Development Plan 2018–2022

Wajir County Government successfully finalized the second-generation county integrated development plan (CIDP) (2018–2022). The CIDP reflects the strategic mid-term development priorities of the county, providing a framework for county budget development and resource allocation and mobilization with a costed implementation plan, provision for monitoring and evaluation and a reporting mechanism.

With the finalization of the draft CIDP, WFP supported two county validation workshops for 200 participants. The CIDP preparation process has provided the county with a framework on which it will derive its annual development plans and a basis for budget appropriation.

County disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation

County executives and county assembly members play a critical role in formulating disaster risk management policies and enacting related legislation. In April, county executives, county assembly members and technical officers from Wajir County’s improved their knowledge of disaster risk reduction and climate change

adaptation at the county level, including effective strategies and mechanisms for integrating gender perspectives into disaster risk reduction policies and legislation. The trained officers are in a better position to plan, prepare gender-responsive budgets and pass legislation that will strengthen disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in the county. The county committed to collecting sex disaggregated data to provide a basis of analysis and inform programme design and implementation. The direction of the WFP resilience-building programme in line with WFP’s Country Strategic Plan (2018–2023) was outlined during the workshops. The county executives and county assembly members were sensitized on the need to anchor the resilience-building programme within a specific county department and provide firm budgetary commitments to the programme.

International Women’s Day

Wajir County participated in a forum for International Women’s Day 2018 “*Time is Now: Rural and Urban Activists Transforming Women’s Lives*” in March 2018. This event aimed to empower female leaders and gender champions through knowledge sharing and networking, ultimately increasing their effectiveness through collaboration. Participants from Baringo, Samburu and Marsabit counties were also present.



Vegetable farming in Beramu, Wajir North.

The forum provided a platform for women to share lessons on mainstreaming gender as informed by a WFP gender analysis study¹ and share perceptions on how to promote empowerment of women. In particular it aimed to:

- promote dialogue on the role of gender in improving nutrition and food security;
- promote cross-learning amongst the participants through showcasing women's contributions in county initiatives;
- enhance networks by bringing county government and women's association leaders together with gender specialists from development partners, civil society, academia and non-governmental organizations;
- facilitate sustainable ties between county leadership and relevant stakeholders to increase knowledge building for women.

Wajir County was represented by six women: the Director of Gender, the gender advisor from the Governor's office, a member of the County Assembly and women from the business community. The county showcased

fruit, vegetables and animal products typically processed and sold by the women's groups to generate income.

Wajir County gave an overview of achievements made in empowering women and the challenges being faced:

- The county government has been positioning women as leaders in key committees within the county assembly, namely agriculture, trade and gender. The two-third gender rule is yet to be met but progress towards it is being made. A reasonable number of women have been either elected or appointed as county executives and directors. In 2018, through the advocacy of women in Wajir County, a youth and gender advisor was appointed at the Governor's office to champion gender equality and women empowerment.
- Wajir County has recently established an irrigation department to enhance rainwater harvesting with the aim of creating opportunities for smallholder farmers in commercial horticultural. Such smallholder farmers, especially women and youth, can access the county revolving funds and the county has also partnered with financial institutions to provide credit on less stringent terms to women within the county.

¹ WFP (2018). Gender Analysis in WFP: Capacity Strengthening Interventions in Four Counties in Kenya. Nairobi: Kenya.



Wajir county team displaying various products from their income-generating activities.

- Conditional safety net programmes supported by the national government and other stakeholders have contributed to progress in female empowerment within the county. In addition, the county avails bursaries for needy families and works closely with UNICEF to promote education of girls and provide support, such as sanitary towels. Resilience-building activities under the Department of Agriculture are providing women with seeds, tools and relevant skills in agriculture.
- Wajir County has unique challenges on gender-based violence, especially towards young girls. The county has therefore developed a gender bill, which is pending approval by the county assembly, and established a gender desk augmented by a helpline, where citizens can report incidents or seek guidance in dealing with gender-based violence. The gender desk has high political accountability, with the county gender director and other female leaders taking lead in following up on individual cases to afford victims access to physical, psychological and legal support.

The guest speaker at the event, Mrs. Ivy Kiptis (First Lady of Baringo County) emphasized the importance of women engaging as equal partners in addressing matters that affect their lives and

households: incorporating women into leadership structures and policy formulation; enhancing women's access to information and resources; and facilitating an enabling and peaceful environment. She singled out gender-based violence as arguably the most widespread and socially tolerated human rights violation, which has a retrogressive effect on women's empowerment as well as a high economic cost. In her view, "if you empower a woman, you empower an entire nation."

Gender responsive policy and legislation

Inclusive policy approaches and a robust legislative environment is critical to addressing sustainably the multiple causes of hunger and food insecurity in Kenya. In 2016, WFP undertook an analysis of the gender dynamics in capacity strengthening activities in Baringo, Marsabit, Samburu and Wajir. The study found that the counties' draft disaster risk management policies tended to be gender neutral or gender blind and recommended that the counties needed to systematically mainstream gender in all policies and related legislation. In response to these recommendations, WFP, in partnership with the Kenya Law Reform Commission, organized a one-week induction for legal drafters on the importance of adopting a gender perspective in law and policymaking.



Participants attending the gender responsive policy and legislation training.

Facilitated by officers from the Parliamentary Service Commission and Kenyatta University School of Law with technical support from the Kenya Law Reform Commission, WFP and UN Women, the legal officers were equipped with knowledge and skills to steer county policy and legislation towards achieving gender equality. Wajir County, one of eight participating arid counties, was represented by the county legal attorney and a legal drafter from the county assembly.

It is anticipated that involving legal counsel in developing policy and legislation will enable gender equality to be mainstreamed within county policy and facilitate establishing targets and indicators for monitoring its progress.

Following the workshop, it was agreed that:

- legal officers and county attorneys will consistently apply the Kenya Constitution and international policy instruments in mainstreaming gender in county policy documentation and legislation across all sectors;
- legal counsel should be involved from the outset in policy development and drafting of legislation to ensure that gender is mainstreamed;
- county governments need to collect disaggregated baseline data on gender equality to inform county development plans, sector strategies, projects and programmes;
- county governments need to review their disaster risk management policies and related legislation to identify and champion opportunities for mainstreaming gender considerations;
- county governments should address and mainstream gender-specific needs in policy documents as well as project implementation plans;
- gender-responsive budgeting should be applied as part of designing and monitoring county strategies;
- targets and indicators of progress in gender equality and gender mainstreaming, including in disaster risk management, should be established, and ongoing collaboration between evaluation units and gender departments at county level should be encouraged in order to monitor the progress.

The Kenya Law Reform Commission committed to supporting Wajir County in developing gender responsive policies and legislation, starting with



Irrigated pasture production in Chuva farm, Wajir North. Mega pans constructed by the county government provided adequate water that support fodder production through irrigation.

review of existing model laws and cascading similar training through the County Assembly Forum and Council of Governors. UN Women pledged to provide technical assistance to the national and county governments in their areas of expertise. It is anticipated that the trained officers will support their respective county departments of gender and social services to review and complete pending gender bills.

Decentralizing county food and nutrition security assessments

The Government of Kenya through the Kenya Food Security Steering Group assesses the performance and impact of the rainy seasons on food security across Kenya after every short (October–December) and long rains season (March–May) – the short rains and long rains assessments, respectively. WFP has supported Wajir County Government technically in this process and specifically through building the capacity of county officers with skills and knowledge to conduct these assessments.

In 2018, during the short rains assessment, WFP continued to build a pool of officers with these technical skills, when county officers gained practical experience in data collection, analysis

and reporting. Officers also participated in disseminating the assessment findings to county stakeholders. Moreover, five officers (four men and one woman) in Wajir County were trained and certified on the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification as level one analysts, enabling them to conduct contextual food security analyses for the long and short rains assessments as well as any ad hoc food security assessment that the county may plan. The trained officers gained experience in improved food security analysis and are currently supporting the county in producing the long and short rains assessments.

Increasing the scope and efficiency of collection and dissemination of county food security and early warning data

Early warning is key to effective emergency preparedness and response. In addition to the twice-yearly food and nutrition security assessment reports (long and short rains assessments), Wajir County produces monthly drought early warning bulletins using the Kenya Drought Early Warning System managed by NDMA, which are shared with county stakeholders.



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Onion farming in Chuva, Wajir North.

To improve Wajir County's capacity to produce and analyse early warning data, WFP facilitated one NDMA information Officer from Wajir County to undertake three days of technical training on early warning and food security in January 2018. The officer gained knowledge of the early warning indicators used in the Kenya Drought Early Warning System and how to integrate these into the monthly early warning bulletins produced by NDMA. The training also included integration of rainfall data from WFP's Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping unit into the monthly bulletins as well as improving the officer's existing capacity in understanding the food consumption and coping strategy indicators that were introduced into the early warning reporting system in 2017.² As a result, five (monthly) bulletins were produced and

2 The Food Consumption Score is an index developed WFP that aggregates household-level data on the diversity and frequency of food groups consumed over the previous seven days. A household's food consumption can be further classified into one of three categories: poor, borderline, or acceptable (http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/manual_guide_proced/wfp197216.pdf).

The Coping Strategy Index is a tool for rapidly measuring household food security, enabling monitoring and assessment of the impact of food aid programmes in humanitarian emergencies. First developing by WFP and CARE in 2003, the methodology was updated in 2008 (<https://www.wfp.org/content/coping-strategies-index-field-methods-manual-2nd-edition>).

disseminated in Wajir County between November 2017 and June 2018 with improved quality in terms of the additional indicators (rainfall, food consumption score and coping strategy index), making them more useful for decision makers.

In addition, NDMA field officers from Wajir County, who interact directly with communities in data collection as well as information feedback, received training on the early warning data collection processes for the Kenya Drought Early Warning System to better understand the indicators used and how to repackage the information for dissemination to the communities.

NDMA consequently undertook a pilot dissemination of early warning information to relevant communities to assess how effectively the communities were able to receive information on hazards and risks that will assist them in protecting their livelihoods.

Geographic information systems and agro-climate data in food security analysis

As part of continued support to Wajir county Government on emergency preparedness and response, WFP assisted four county officers

to understand the use of remotely sensed drought monitoring data (e.g. rainfall estimates, the Water Requirement and Satisfaction Index for crops and rangeland and the Normalized Differential Vegetation Index) and the use of relevant analytical tools. For participants, this was an opportunity to improve their capacity for integrated analysis of food security data in line with that found at the national level within Kenya. The trained officers learnt how to apply online food security analytical tools using remotely sensed data within the county, including agro-climatic analyses, as well as present reports and conduct ground-truthing assessments for agro-climatic data. The training was also undertaken for Baringo, Samburu and Marsabit counties. The training also covered the use of remotely sensed data in the production of early warning bulletins and other relevant county reports and briefs. With this knowledge, Wajir County Government is now in a better position to support their decision making in instituting emergency preparedness measures and activating contingency and response plans, including allocating funds, with remotely sensed data.

Kenya Food Security Steering Group assessment methodology review and lessons learnt workshop

WFP continued to support both the national and Baringo, Marsabit, Samburu and Wajir county governments to conduct the short and long rains assessments independently. During the previous assessments, finalization of the sectoral data collection tools, further refinement of the assessment methodology and improvements on the analytical framework including estimation of the populations in need were identified as areas for improvement.

Some 32 participants from the Kenya Food Security Steering Group at the national level, which included one representative from Wajir County, reviewed the food and nutrition security assessment methodology and tools, including approaches used in the analysis. The updated methodology and tools will be used during the 2018 Long Rains Assessment and subsequent assessments. A reporting guide was also produced and the methodology for classifying the severity of the emergency and level of affected populations reviewed. It is expected that the revised reporting guide will enhance the quality of analysis during the Long Rains Assessment as well

as future assessments. With the improved quality of the process and the products, the usability of these products at the county level is enhanced.

Safety net programmes

Moving from relief towards investments in building resilience

WFP continued to support the County Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries to strengthen implementation of the resilience-building activities. With WFP support, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology revised the *Food Assistance for Assets* manual, which was then reviewed by county officers from Wajir, Marsabit and Samburu before being validated. The manual and accompanying facilitators' guide covered a range of considerations including a decision tree to facilitate selection of appropriate assets and technology and mainstreaming of nutrition, gender and youth engagement in resilience-building activities.

In June 2018, the county hosted executive and technical officers from Isiolo County to review and understand the county-led resilience-building programme.

Transitioning the resilience-building programme to the county government

In line with the implementation of its five-year Country Strategic Plan (2018–2023), WFP's resilience-building activities will be delivered through a food systems approach – focusing on the production, transformation and consumption of food. The implementation of the County Strategic Plan heralds a significant shift in WFP strategy from providing direct support to vulnerable people to strengthening capacities of county governments and communities to engage in emergency preparedness and response, with the aim of ensuring that targeted smallholder producers and food-insecure and vulnerable populations benefit from more sustainable, inclusive food long-term resilience to climatic and other shocks. Within this strategy, WFP will continue transferring cash or food to families working on productive assets to meet their food gap but in a reduced manner and will partner with county governments to strengthen their capacity to deliver sustainable food systems.



Field-based training of extension officers.

In terms of implementing the strategy for the Sustainable Food Systems Programme, several consultative meetings were held with Wajir County leadership and stakeholders to improve their knowledge and understanding of the WFP Country Strategic Plan. National consultative meetings were held with county executives and relevant directors, representatives from NDMA, and cooperating partners. Follow up meetings were held with technical officers from the agriculture, livestock, water, nutrition and disaster risk management sectors who benefited from the opportunity to contribute to the development of the country capacity strengthening strategy, including outlining capacity needs mapping.

Capacity strengthening for county-led safety nets

Social protection

WFP provided technical assistance to develop a county social protection management information system that will be used by county governments, including Wajir, to manage the operations of their social protection initiatives. This system will be linked to the national Single Registry. Linking data from county-led social protection programmes will

strengthen the capabilities of the Single Registry. The additional data will further expand the use of the Single Registry as a policy tool to provide a single point of reference for information in the social protection sector, providing policymakers, programme managers and implementers with the information they need to coordinate activities in the social protection sector.

In February 2018, an assessment considering operational processes, information requirements and the county's governance and institutional arrangements was carried out in Wajir to ascertain the readiness of the current county social protection management information system to link with and utilize the Single Registry. The assessment highlighted the fragmented and limited scope of most of the social protection programmes, which were characterized by poor targeting and lack of standardization of transfer values, lack of trained staff on national social protection systems, and lack of county social protection guidelines and standard procedures.

The development process of this system brought together senior technical officers from information communications technology and gender and social services from selected county governments



Field based training of extension officers.

to provide the crucial inputs required for the development of the management information system. The participants provided clear and concise feedback on their current and proposed social protection interventions, programming processes, their expectations for a county social protection management information system, prioritization of functionality to be developed first and the comprehensive support framework they would require from WFP to effectively establish this. The outputs of the workshop were used to develop a generic county social protection

management information system that was validated through a user-acceptance test by participants drawn from eight counties, including Wajir.

The next phase of the project will provide an opportunity to further determine if the system is ready to be piloted. Besides the piloting process, each targeted county, including Wajir, will develop a social protection strategy, if not in place already, which will form the basis for establishing social protection interventions.



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