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WFP's Work in Enabling Social Protection in Somalia

Highlights of the World Food Programme's Contributions to Social Protection in a New Normal

March 2021

Establishing a Nationwide Social Protection Programme in Somalia

Somalia is one of the world's most fragile nations; it suffers from an ongoing insurgency by Al-Shabab, two separatist states maintain aspirations for independence, and a fledgling government struggles to maintain authority across the country.

In this context, WFP has been a leading actor in social protection, supporting the Federal Government of Somalia in shaping the social protection environment and in the development of social protection policy and frameworks. In 2020, WFP was able to support responses to COVID-19, floods and desert locust invasions by drawing on the learnings from almost a decade of providing assistance to vulnerable Somalis through cash-based transfers.

Over the past year, WFP, in close partnership with the World Bank and UNICEF, has been assisting the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in establishing a delivery mechanism for the social protection system in Somalia. The collaborative effort led to the launch of the first nationwide cash-based poverty alleviation programme: the Shock-Responsive Safety Net for Human Capital Project (SNHCP), also known as Baxnaano. This is a significant achievement for the Government, and is the culmination of years of work by WFP and UNICEF in supporting the Government to develop a social protection framework and plan for Somalia.

WFP's role in 2020 focused on many of the practical aspects of delivering national social assistance, namely



BUILDING SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS IN FRAGILE CONTEXTS



the development of mechanisms for registration and delivery of support to two hundred thousand households, or 1.2 million people across Somalia. WFP has implemented the SNHCP programme on behalf of the Ministry, while working closely with government officials in the programme implementation unit, in order to enable an eventual hand over to the Ministry. The experience of this collaboration and WFP's support overall will help to shape the next steps for Somalia's social protection system.

WFP's experience and resources to operate at scale in the fragile and politically unstable context saw it uniquely placed to provide this support to government.

The organization's ability to adapt and find solutions enabled the Government to navigate the difficulty of reaching people with social assistance where limited government services exist.

WFP was also able to assist the government in a vertical and horizontal expansion of the SNHCP programme when the population of Somalia faced the triple shocks of floods, COVID-19 and locusts in 2020. To facilitate these efforts, WFP and the Government received a US\$40 million contribution from the World Bank, enabling additional support to affected communities. WFP aims to reach 600,000 locust affected people (or 100,000 HHs) in 45 districts over six months through the safety net expansion. Complementary efforts to reduce the impact and control the locust outbreak also continue in close coordination with FAO and the Government.

In the context of COVID-19, WFP shifted the SNHCP payment delivery system to mobile money transfers to allow beneficiaries to receive transfers in remote areas and where banking facilities are not present, reducing travel distances and contact risks. This facilitated an ability to expand the programme in response to the increased needs of the pandemic, floods, and locusts.



Relationship building and collaboration between social protection partners has been key to the success, not only of the SNHCP programme but also for the longer-term objective of building a strong, national social protection system.

WFP and UNICEF supported the government in developing the 2019 Somalia Social Protection Policy and the Social Protection Implementation Plan, and WFP, UNICEF and ILO, have coordinated to provide capacity strengthening support to the government in the journey towards government-owned and implemented social protection programmes. Collaboration between WFP, UNICEF, ILO and the World Bank has amplified what could be achieved with the Government by one agency alone.

The organizations together are drawing on their relative expertise to rapidly build a social protection system in Somalia where none existed before. This has already shown distinct value in the COVID-19 response and will continue contributing to peace and stability in the years to come.



To know more about WFP's work in enabling social protection around the globe check the full publication and infographic:

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