



Monitoring Report

Country Name:	Republic of South Sudan
Report Date:	07/09/2018
Project Title:	Enhancing the Food Security and Disaster Resilience of vulnerable communities in Upper Nile State, South Sudan

I. INTERVENTION DATA

Status:	3 rd Interim Narrative Report expected Sept 2018
Monitoring Report Type:	On-going
Aid Modality:	Project Approach
Project:	Pro-Resilience Action (PRO-ACT)
Report:	
Project Management:	Technical Assistance (TA) for increased agriculture production of smallholders in South Sudan
Financed via a thematic budget line	EDF
CRIS Number:	
Project Title according to Financing Agreement/Financing Decision/Contract:	Enhancing the Food Security and Disaster Resilience of vulnerable communities in Upper Nile State, South Sudan
Domain:	EDF - Rural Development Programme
DAC-CRS Sector:	Agriculture
Additional DAC-CRS Code:	
Geographical Zone:	Counties of Malakal, Fashoda and Manyo, Upper Nile State
Keyword:	
Date Financing Agreement/Financing Decision/Contract signed:	EUROPEAID/136723/DD/ACT/SS
Responsible at Headquarter:	Stefano Ellero (Head of Cooperation)
Responsible at EUD:	Charles Rukusa
ROM Expert:	Constantine Bitwayiki
Project Authority:	Encas Chau (Cordaid)
Start Date – planned:	09/12/2015
End Date – planned:	08/12/2018
Start Date – actual:	01/01/2016
End Date – likely:	30/06/2019
Monitoring visit date:	27 th – 31 st August 2018

II. FINANCIAL DATA

Primary Commitment (EC funding):	EURO 2,388,941
Budget allocated for TA:	
Secondary Commitment (funds contracted of EC contribution):	EURO 2,388,941
Other Funding (government and / or other donors: Cordaid (10%)	EURO 265,438
Total Budget of Operation:	EURO 2,654,379
Total EU budget disbursed:	
Financial data as at:	



1. Project Background:

The CORDAID project entitled “Enhancing the Food Security and Disaster Resilience of vulnerable communities in Upper Nile State, South Sudan” falls under the Pro-Resilience Action (PRO-ACT) initiatives. CORDAID is collaborating with the South Sudan Development Agency (SSUDA), a national non-governmental organization, to implement the project.

It is important to note that the Upper Nile State is one of the parts of South Sudan that has experienced both natural hazards and conflicts in an on and off manner since 2013 to September 2017. The security situation in the Western Bank of River Nile-the project site, became worse from late 2016 till September 2017 which directly affected project implementation. However, since October 2017, the security situation started improving enabling commencement of project activities that had been abandoned.

The purpose of the project is to improve the food security and disaster resilience of vulnerable population groups in the conflict affected counties of Malakal, Fashoda and Manyo, in the Upper Nile State. The expected results of the project are (i) improved knowledge and capacity of 8 communities, 4 county government departments and 3 local NGO's to enhance food security and disaster resilience in an integrated manner (including peace building and disaster prevention), and (ii) enhanced food security of 8 communities (3,000 households) through the implementation of food security and disaster resilience measures.

The project is expected to contribute to the reversal of the trend of thousands of people moving to the UN protected areas in the Upper Nile State to access services such as medication, food and clean water, which the project aims to address in the target communities. The project is also employing a multi-pronged approach to improve food security and empowering vulnerable households and communities as well as strengthening institutional capacity to provide sustainable skills transfer in various agricultural production disaster reduction practices.

Expected key outputs under the 2 result areas:

Output 1.1: Community Managed Disaster Risk (CMDRR) ToT carried out

Output 1.2: Community members trained to participate in PDRA

Output 1.3: Community Level Action Plans (CLAPs) initiated

Output 1.4: Farmer Field Schools (FFS) set up and operationalised

Output 1.5: Agri-business opportunities identified and developed

Output 1.6: Training in peace building and reconciliation undertaken

Output 1.7: Community based monitoring and impact measurement of FFS undertaken

Output 1.8: Food Security and Fragility Analysis carried out

Project Beneficiaries:

The number of direct beneficiaries is estimated at 18,000 persons. The number of HH directly targeted is 3,000 food insecure and conflict affected rural households in 8 communities, 3 counties (Manyo 1,000, Malakal/Westbank 1,000, and Fashoda 1,000) in Upper Nile. Other beneficiaries include: 50 staff from State/County Governments and Civil society (30 from 4 involved Ministries and 20 from 3 local NGOs).

Project Baseline Study Summary Findings:

The baseline study was undertaken mid-way the project implementation period. Most of the training activities were at zero as a baseline (starting) figure at the beginning of the project.



2. Project Intervention Logic:

Cordaid developed a logframe with an intervention logic clearly stipulating the overall objective, specific objectives, result areas, activities, objectively verifiable indicators and assumptions (Refer to Annex 1).

III. GRADINGS

1. Relevance and quality of design	A
2. Efficiency of implementation	C
3. Effectiveness	C
4. Impact prospects	B
5. Potential sustainability	B

Note: **a** = Very Good; **b** = Good; **c** = Problems; and **d** = Serious deficiencies

IV. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

1. Relevance and Quality of Design	<p>The project is in line with the Pro-Resilience Action (PRO-ACT) EU/EC supported initiatives in South Sudan.</p> <p>Strengthening of institutional capacity for Ministries of Agriculture, Cooperatives, Rural Development, Livestock and Fisheries at national, state and county levels by training key technical staff on the FFS and the CMDRR approaches is commendable as is aligned to the overall national capacity building efforts for the people of South Sudan.</p> <p>Building of capacity through training of partners' staff, local authorities and facilitators in CMDRR (using different tools to analyze hazards, vulnerabilities and capacities of people) is relevant in the disaster prone project area.</p> <p>Promotion of Community Level Action Planning by prioritisation of identified capacity gaps, development of contingencies (disaster preparedness) plans, disaster risk reduction plans and assessment of scenarios on how to act in cases of disasters. This presents an opportunity for the beneficiaries to identify their own solutions remedies instead of being imposed. This promotes ownership of the interventions within the communities.</p> <p>Supporting of Agriculture extension services through the Farmers Field School Approach (FFS) and peace building facilitating access to productive assets among farmers and fishers promoting improved practices and technologies for increasing production and productivity. This is in line with the National Agriculture and Livestock Extension Policy (NALEP).</p> <p>Linking relief rehabilitation and development by providing relief for PROACT project beneficiaries to begin livelihood restoration and protection using the</p>
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	<p>SHO humanitarian and the EU/EC funding in parallel. The humanitarian aid levels the environment for the PROACT development activities within the vulnerable households and communities.</p> <p>The introduction of the Participatory Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning System (MEALS) concept emphasizing the promotion of learning from lessons of successful project events and activities to further enhance resilience among the households and communities is a good innovation.</p> <p>The project design takes cognisance of cross-cutting issues of gender, environment, donor coordination and collaboration and governance, amongst others.</p> <p>The project design ensures a good working relationship between Cordaid, the National and State Governments and national community based organisations (SSUDA) with clear roles and responsibilities during project implementation. This leads to future sustainability of the project results.</p> <p>Alignment and joint programming of the project activities implementation with other implementing partners of related projects supported by the EU/EC and other donors to bridge the unfunded gaps is commendable.</p> <p>Introduction of conditional and unconditional cash transfers through the SHO grant enhanced market stimulation, rehabilitation of market facilities, cleaning of debris and rehabilitation of community infrastructures was a well thought idea to encourage and motivate returnees in the project area.</p> <p>Inter-communal peace dialogues are ongoing with radio peace messages and face to face dialogues. Of late, due to the radio peace messages, members of different communities have started meeting face to face discussing development issues within their different communities.</p>
2. Efficiency in implementation	<p>As much as the project design emphasized a collaborative working relationship between Cordaid, SSUDA and the State and County Governments during project implementation, the working relationship and linkages are still weak. Notwithstanding the high government staff turnover, the State and County Government officials met in Malakal and Wau-Shulluk respectively exhibited low awareness and minimal participation in the project activities.</p> <p>It is also noted that there is high senior Cordaid project staff (Manager and Field Coordinator) turnover that has</p>



had an effect on timely decision making to move the project faster and forward. During the absence of the Cordaid senior project staff, SSUDA on some occasion has had delays in implementing new activities that require approval by Cordaid like FFS graduation that has not taken place.

The internal project monitoring and evaluation is led by the Project Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEAL) Officer in collaboration with SSUDA staff stationed in the project implementation locations. There is minimal government official participation in the monitoring and evaluation activities of the project. However, the M&E indicators in the logical framework were revised to meet the SMART criteria. Participatory community based monitoring approach has not yet been adopted to encourage community implementation follow up, data collection and analysis to assess performance in their own localities.

The project team has adequately prepared the mandatory quarterly and annual reports and shared them at the quarterly and annual project review events. There is vertical and horizontal communication about the project performance. However, there is inadequate feedback mechanism (information flow and sharing) to the beneficiaries and the government offices for accountability and learning from the lessons.

After planting, most of the crops (maize and sorghum) have been destroyed by pests and diseases especially the armyworm in Wau-Shulluk. On interacting with farmers they appeared to have lost hope just looking on as the crops are destroyed. The seeds procured and distributed to farmers have not yielded any results as per the project objectives.

There is water shortage during the dry season leading to vegetable crops drying up and also being attacked by pests and diseases. Treadle and fuel pumps have just been procured awaiting distribution to farmers to ameliorate water shortages for vegetable growing.

Most of the VSLA groups formed have not had adequate training to effectively and efficiently operate VSLA business transactions.

Under the post-harvest intervention, emphasis on good handling of the harvests has been emphasized during training sessions. However, physical post-harvest items like local improved granaries that resist rat entry and provide good moisture content to reduce the post-harvest losses are not yet implemented.



3. Effectiveness	<p>Through the review of project implementation progress reports and meetings with the field project team, and beneficiary groups, since the last field monitoring mission in February 2018, an appreciable implementation progress of the project activities has been realised. Below is the summary of the achievements to date for each of the result area (outcome) indicators as per the project logframe.</p> <p>Result Area 1: Improved knowledge and capacity of 8 communities, 4 county government departments and 3 local NGOs to enhance food security and disaster resilience in an integrated manner (including peace building and disaster prevention).</p> <p>Trainings are the major undertakings that have been implemented under result area 1. It is worth to note that at the start of implementation of result area 1, the baseline (starting) figure was 0.</p> <p>The training status as of end August 2018:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) Number of Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) TOT trained – end February 2018 (12), end August 2018 (32 out of 50 targeted) – 64% performance(b) Number of Participatory Disaster Risk Analysis (PDRA) Committees trained – 3 out of 3 targeted – 100% performance(c) Number of Community Led Action Plans (CLAPs) developed – 6 out of 9 – 67% performance(d) Number of FFS groups formed and trained – end February (34), end of August (46 out of 100) – 46% performance(e) Number of FFS groups finished FFS cycle - end February (34), end of August (46 out of 100) – 46% performance(f) % reduction in local conflicts (baseline 56.3%, target 10% reduction) – end August 2018 (45%) – 45% performance(g) % of Community members feeling relative peace (baseline 2%, target 90%) end August 2018 (45%) – 45% performance(h) Number of Communities with contingency risk reduction plan – end of August 2018 (6 out of 9) – 67% performance
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	<p>Result Area 2: Enhanced food security of 8 communities (3,000 households) through the implementation of food security and disaster resilience measures</p> <p>Note: During the February 2018 field monitoring mission, most of the activities under result 2 were at the initiation stage of implementation.</p> <p>As of end August 2018, the implementation performance is summarised below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) Number of people from the beneficiary Community trained in income generating activities (IGA) – Target 300, None has been trained (0% performance)(b) % increase in FFS agricultural production (baseline 7%, target 90%) – 22% (22% performance)(c) % reduction in flood damage to property and agriculture production (baseline 41%, target 30%) – 38% (38% performance)(d) Number of households accessing clean drinking water (baseline 21, target 3000) – None (0% performance)(e) % increase of FFS groups satisfied with extension services (target 3,000) – 1,380 (36% performance)(f) Number of FFS groups graduated (target 90) – None (0% performance)(g) Number of food security and fragility studies conducted (target 1) – 1 (100% performance)(h) Number of VSLA formed (target 12) – 18 (150% performance)(i) Number of VSLA trained (target 12) - 5 (42% performance)(j) Number of Agri-business opportunities identified (target 3) – None (0% performance)(k) Number of Mid-term evaluation conducted (target 1) – None (0% performance) – However, consultant commenced assignment in the last week of August 2018.
4. Impact Prospects	<p>During the meetings, it was evident that the project has created a high impetus among the beneficiaries to engage in agricultural production and peace building for socioeconomic wellbeing</p> <p>Socio cohesion was vivid among the groups arising from working together to address common challenges and responding to different shocks affecting them as different communities. The groups seek further support</p>



	<p>on the water for production and chemicals for pests and diseases challenges as they work hard to raise their agricultural productivity.</p> <p>Training and supporting beneficiary members in post-harvest handling technologies, pest and disease control has raised awareness in the adoption of modern innovative agricultural practices to improve future agriculture production and incomes.</p>
5. Potential Sustainability	<p><i>Technical Capacity</i></p> <p>The Cordaid/SSUDA project has planned to strengthen the agricultural extension service provision by providing further training support to the State and County government extension staff and community workers. This presents an opportunity for project sustainability within the project area.</p> <p>Existence of 32 FFS facilitators, 3 Participatory Disaster Risk Analysis (PDRA) Committees that never existed in the communities before is a positive step in the right direction.</p> <p>There are still appeals by the State and County Government officials for the Cordaid/SSUDA to fully involve them in the monitoring and evaluation of the project activities for ownership and future sustainability of the project outcomes.</p> <p><i>Enabling socio-political environment</i></p> <p>The support to peace building training key in strengthening socio cohesion among the communities to create an enabling peaceful environment for agricultural production, marketing and income generation.</p> <p><i>Adoption of modern agronomic practices promotion</i></p> <p>The farmers show enthusiasm and willingness to adopt post-harvest technology arising from training provided to them by Cordaid/SSUDA.</p> <p>There is a high demand for the water pumps to be able to irrigate their vegetable gardens during the dry season.</p> <p><i>Financing Capacity</i></p> <p>VSLA activities have commenced and beneficiaries have started setting up group and individual business enterprises to be able to buy own seeds and other agriculture inputs to boost production and productivity</p>

V. KEY OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Key Observations (successes)	<p>It was vital and prudent for the Cordaid/SSUDA to initially focus on the priorities to emergency lifesaving, livelihood protections and recovery in order to create an enabling environment for the implementation of the PRO-ACT initiative.</p> <p>Inter-communal peace dialogues are ongoing with radio peace messages and face to face dialogues. Of late, due to the radio peace messages, members of different communities have started meeting face to face discussing development issues within their different communities. The initial idea of using radio messages other than conducting face to face dialogue was a well thought design strategy shift.</p> <p>There is high level of optimism among the beneficiaries to get engaged in agriculture to improve their livelihoods.</p> <p>The National and State Government officials are in full support of the project activities geared towards the improvement of the beneficiary food insecurity and disaster management levels.</p> <p>The market structures that have been constructed in the project areas are promoting social cohesion among the different communities through the market management committee representations and ease of market access to sale the agricultural and livestock products.</p> <p>Promotion of peaceful co-existence is being promoted within the benefiting communities.</p>
Key Observations (not worked well)	<p>Construction of dykes has been found not applicable in the project area and instead resorted to digging of water channels and planting of trees on the river banks to limit over flooding.</p> <p>Delays in implementing the FFS graduating activity is delaying the identification of lead farmers within the beneficiary communities</p> <p>Community based participatory monitoring approach is not yet entrenched in the overall project monitoring and evaluation processes.</p> <p>High turnover of Cordaid project management team affecting quick decision making during project implementation</p> <p>Inadequate M&E reports dissemination and feedback mechanisms to the beneficiaries</p> <p>Weak working relationship and linkages with State and County government officials</p>



	<p>EU project visibility promotion is still inadequate in terms of production and distribution of visibility materials to the beneficiary communities</p> <p>Other issues identified include: inadequate adherence to the instructions to fighting vegetable pests and diseases by the FFS facilitators, involvement of the FFS facilitators in other non-project activities leaving minimal time to concentrate on the core project FFS activities of provision of advisory services to the farmers</p>
Recommendations	<p>There is an urgent need for Cordaid and SSUDA to urgently develop a detailed plan of action on all areas where the scores are very low (Grade C) and hold a meeting with the TA in Juba to discuss the action plan implementation with a view to speeding up the implementation of activities that are lagging behind since the project is nearing closure.</p> <p>There is need to carefully scale up coordination meetings and interface with the State and County Government officials to ensure ownership and sustainability of the project results.</p> <p>The community based participatory monitoring approach needs to be fully entrenched in the overall project monitoring and evaluation practices.</p> <p>Feedback mechanisms to the beneficiaries need to be effected using different dissemination media.</p>