CLIMATE SMART WATER GOVERNANCE
PROGRAM EVALUATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Climate Smart Water Governance project sought to address inequality and unequal access to water in Garissa and Kilifi counties. The perennial water shortages continue to affect these dry areas, causing malnutrition, domestic and inter-clan conflicts. The severity of prioritizing better water management practises cannot be overemphasized, especially within the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) regions of the country. Different interventions that focus policy development, behaviour change, community water storage action, and practises directly linked to utilization of water resource, remain paramount. Climate smart water governance project was designed to effect change through policy advocacy that included facilitation of engagement forums and session between the government and stakeholders within the water sector, including the community. This process intended to achieve better water management practices and easy accessibility to the scarce resource.

The project with an 18-month implementation period was well set out with three outputs laid out as a roadmap to achieving smarter mechanisms of water management and governance across the two counties of Garissa and Kilifi. This report documents findings from an end line evaluation using outcome harvesting. The initial stage comprised of the description of the outcome process, identification of stakeholders to be involved in the harvesting process. The respondents were identified via a purposive sampling process, infused with grounded theory. The saturation levels were achieved, at a notable sample size of 40 individuals per sub-county where the project was implemented, (treating a sub-county as a sample frame where change happens), as well as a similar number for the substantiation process.

The sampling ensured gender inclusivity with the total number of respondents at the household level, key informants and workshop formats having an almost 50/50 ratio of male and female attendants. The outcomes were analysed based on the orientation of change, with the stories constituting a total of 24 outcomes harvested in the two counties. The analysis themes focused on the role of the project, orientation of the outcome, type of change, and the level of change. The most frequent types of changes were from outcomes that affected community's knowledge and capabilities (12/24 outcomes) and the strategies (6 of 24 outcomes). These outcomes show that though there was minimal messaging about the project, the aim at behaviour change based on the training from the project resulted in positive outcomes at (20 of 24 outcomes). Additional substantiation was done using behaviour categorization of; Always, Most of the time, Sometimes, Half the time, Never and Not Applicable.

The project provided value across the community and individual levels; with the most significant outcomes (18 of 24 outcomes) showing an improvement in water management processes at individual and household levels. Other outcomes that focused on community engagement, group formation and conflict management, were confirmed. In Garissa, the stories documented conflict resolution processes improved both at the community and the household levels. The outcome on stakeholder's engagement, especially with the water services providers like GAWASCO, MAWASCO, KIMAWASCO and Northern water services board, was not witnessed, at least at the community level. The full list of the outcomes with the table is included in the annex.

Climate Smart water Governance project implemented several activities within the two counties. Through the lens of the communities, various activities were accomplished including beach cleaning, tree planting, capacity building, vegetable, and fruit farming,

increasing water storage capacity, training, pit-latrine construction, and installation of gutters. However, the project objectives as presented in the initial proposal were not directly addressed by most of the activities. One outcome was that the activities brought the communities together and increased communal efforts in better water management practices in general.

Second level gains resulting from the training activities are vital and a key-component, especially in enhancing community resilience capacities and resource management processes. Residence within these two counties reminisced and provided detailed accounts and stories of what they deem to have been the objective of the project. Their response was contradictory to the outcomes as developed through the stakeholder engagements, as the venues for the meetings or the presentation of activities did not align to the realities in the community. While such attribution challenges are generally acceptable, it is a component that could have been addressed by having a better IEC material to enable to community to identify the direct and intended project outcome.

The general feedback from the communities showed some barriers and enablers during the project implementation. The project design assumptions served as one of the barriers. The project assumed the water status, the level of engagement and the specific interests of the water boards (especially in instances where they served cross county community needs) and the goodwill of the county's stakeholders. Additionally, conflict systems in these communities, and the adoption/uptake process on policies, was also assumed.

Poor branding and marking plan during community activities, training, and campaign activities, may have resulted in scenarios where the community members assumed the Climate Smart Water Governance project to be related to other donor activities within the same counties. In most instances, the respondents would provide success stories from other projects, only to change when clarification was sought on the Climate Smart Water Governance project. While there were changes in the behaviour of communities in Garissa, there was marginal change in Kilifi. The study was therefore unable to conclusively assign or determine the level of attribution or contribution from the project to the witnessed changes.

The study recommends the following:

1.   The baseline made substantial assumptions for the project. The same can also be said about religious differences and the conflict systems motivated by clans' tribes (like in Garissa), and socio-cultural livelihood options (Pastoralists vs Agrarian communities in Garissa and Kilifi Respectively). For future engagements, projects should include other issues for review at the baseline to avoid assumed barriers to the project.

2.   At output level, the Climate Smart Water Governance project evaluation was great, allowing for evidence of participant attendance to some project activities. However, the low-level outcomes were not monitored well. The project relied on face to face, communication with the target population without a proper monitoring and evaluation process. The activity reports focused more on the outputs and administrative indicators. Education levels and local engagement did not account for literacy levels, making it difficult for the local activities to report and capture change as it happened. While challenges relate to literacy levels, especially in rural communities where the project was implemented, the development of easy-to-refer-to material; with key messages from the training, and advocacy activities; would have gone a long way to provide the linkage between the successes and the project.

3.   The project sought to include some of these critical individuals during project implementation, including the Ogaden clan in Garissa and the Kaya Elders in Kilifi. However, while concentrating on these gatekeepers, local leaders and some religious leaders, other individuals including the local chief, Nyumba-kumi[1] leaders, Youth leaders and family setups (for household engagement) were assumed. The assumption was on the basis that information flow is quick and easily transmitted from the leaders to the beneficiaries without an intentional commitment to a larger messaging activity. Future programs should conduct a risk assessment and understand local dynamics relating to gatekeepers and the impacts they have. Additionally, within communities, programs cannot be properly implemented without the support from the government. Responses from Key informant interviews showed that minimal engagement was accorded to these groups, resulting in lack of information and goodwill. At the basic level, engagement with the local chief would have provided an opportunity and a platform for regular messaging on water issues and feedback sessions in community Barazas.

4.   Though this evaluation did not specifically review the level of uptake on the policy document developed; (as it forms part of the last activity implemented during the evaluation), as a recommendation, advocacy activities on the Water Bill passed in Garissa, should have pointers on areas that the community would require action, and the steps the community would follow in case action is not witnessed within a specified period. This allows for ease of monitoring, follow-up, and evaluation of success. Future engagements should pay close attention to the nuances of policy development, adoption, and implementation process and avoid the assumptions witnessed in this project.

5.   Climate Change and Water Governance feature prominently locally and internationally. While there are organizations that heavily rely on Hard-Evidence project that include sinking of dams, building of water pans, and provision of tanks; there are others that focus on Soft-Evidence Project relating to; training and capacity building, policy development, review, and budget influence (at-least at county level), which the Climate Smart Water Governance project adopted. The project included a mix of both activities but lacked a clear indication of how the two approaches would build on each other. This is a challenge associated with a poor theory of change development. Critical attention is required before launching activities in the field.

For a comprehensive review of the level of attribution and contribution for projects, a broad-base longitudinal study is required in the different counties.

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[1] This is a local security unit at the ward level that works with the national government on matters of security.

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