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## EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS AND RESILIENCE BUILDING FOR DROUGHT-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES IN NAMIBIA

March 2021

SDGs:



Countries:

Namibia

Project Code:

TCP/NAM/3705

FAO Contribution

USD 400 000

Duration:

25 January 2019 – 30 June 2020

Contact Info:

FAO Representation in Namibia

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### Implementing Partners

Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform (MAWLR).

### Beneficiaries

Households in drought hotspots in Erongo, Kunene, Omaheke and Otjozondjupa regions.

### Country Programming Framework (CPF) Outputs

Strategic Objective 5 (SO5) – Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises.

*Two United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPAF) Pillars*

Pillar 1: Economic Progression and Pillar 3: Environmental Sustainability.

*Four CPF Priority Areas*

Priority Area 2: Improved agricultural production, productivity, food safety and strengthened nutrition-sensitive value chains.

Priority Area 3: Strengthened capacity for natural resource management and land governance.

Priority Area 4: Strengthened capacity for disaster risk reduction, resilience building and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Priority Area 5: Improved preparedness to agricultural threats and crises.



### BACKGROUND

Small-scale farming represents the backbone of the agriculture sector in Namibia, driven by livestock rearing, production and export as a main source of food, livelihood and income. Over the years, smallholder crop production has increasingly added a significant dimension to the agriculture sector, despite its heavy reliance on rainfed and subsistence-based production, which predisposes rural households to climate-related vulnerabilities. In this context, the most vulnerable households are still recovering from the aftermath of 2013/2014 and 2015/2016 El Niño-induced droughts, the worst the country experienced in over 80 years.

Since then, Namibia has seen a spike in agricultural production, thanks to favourable weather conditions – except for pockets of household food insecurity in the northwest, west and southern regions hardest hit by dry spells, excessive rains and high prevalence of the Fall Armyworm (FAW). As farmers gear up for the next agricultural season, another El Niño event is probable and already altering precipitation patterns. Of particular concern is the slow regreening of vegetation, owing to poor and delayed onset of rains, with severe implications for grazing and livestock conditions in hotspot areas. If the current forecast holds, 150 000 households may face a combination of poor harvests and/or reduced herds and further livestock mortalities, as well as limited access to water for the third consecutive season. This would be detrimental for livelihoods and the overall ability to cope, deepening food and nutrition insecurity in 2019, with ripple effects felt in 2020 and beyond. Against this background, the project aimed to protect and restore agricultural production, incomes and assets, and ensure a nutritious and diversified diet for the most vulnerable households in times of El Niño-induced climate extremes and stressors.

### IMPACT

The demand-driven rehabilitation of boreholes will, for many years to come, enable beneficiary communities to have access to clean and sufficient water for household consumption and their livestock, while the distribution of survival stock feed will protect core breeding herds and ensure that livestock-based livelihoods are sustained. Overall, it is expected that the project will contribute to increasing the resilience of agriculture-based livelihoods and enhancing food security and nutrition within the targeted regions.

### ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS

A total of 2 400 households was reached through the distribution of survival stock feed, successfully protecting nearly 16 000 large stock equivalents (core breeding herds) and associated livelihoods from devastating drought. In addition, the capacities of agricultural extension workers and beneficiary households were strengthened through the targeted Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS) training activities that were organized.

Specifically, 180 tonnes of multinutrient blocks and the same amount of nutritious lucerne hay were procured and distributed to the beneficiaries in drought hotspots in the target regions, namely Erongo, Kunene, Omaheke and Otjozondjupa. In addition, awareness and surveillance material, diagnostic kits, equipment, vaccines/drugs and protective gear (mainly for anthrax) were procured and distributed to the beneficiary households.

Thirty-nine agricultural extension workers were trained on LEGS. On returning to their respective duty stations and regions, and with support from FAO, the trained extension workers conducted community-level Farmer Information Days to support the Government to roll out the 2019/2020 Drought Response Plan, while contributing to the long-term resilience building efforts at community level.

The project also supported the awareness raising and training of 35 government officials on Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), including drafting a road map for the first rollout of IPC-based reporting in Namibia.

Following the identification of sites to be rehabilitated, and the successful procurement of all required materials, Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform (MAWLR) artisans rehabilitated two boreholes along drought-induced livestock migration routes in Kunene. Despite initial delays, owing to the inconsistent delivery of borehole materials by the supplier, both sites were completed and now serve as important sources of clean drinking water to both livestock and human beings. In addition, with the support of the complementary (FAO Office for Special Relief Operations) project, OSRO/NAM/601/ROK (Improving water access in the drought affected regions of Namibia), an additional eight boreholes were rehabilitated and four traditional wells were upgraded (to solar-powered pumping systems), to meet the needs of the communities in the targeted regions.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

Some challenges were experienced during the project, including: i) staffing constraints and overall implementation arrangements, coupled with protracted technical clearance of specifications for materials that were procured; ii) delayed delivery of some of the borehole materials by the supplier (partly influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic regulations and movement restrictions between countries); and iii) transportation challenges, leading to minor delays in the final distribution of stock feed to end beneficiaries in Kunene. All these constraints were resolved without causing any negative impact to the project.

All borehole rehabilitation and solar installations were done by the MAWLR, enabling the Ministry to rehabilitate the two boreholes/sites with a limited budget, which would not have been possible if it had been outsourced, as per standard procedure. As a result of this, and despite the unexpected stock feed price fluctuations that occurred during the project, FAO Namibia was able to procure enough quantities of supplementary feeds, as per the initial plan.

In addition, the project was complemented by two other projects, namely the OSRO project, OSRO/SFS/801/USA (Strengthening coordination and information systems in response to drought conditions and other hazards threatening food and nutrition security and livelihoods in Southern Africa) and the OSRO/NAM/601/ROK project, mentioned above. In order to synchronize with the activities in these projects and ensure the effective delivery and optimum utilization of resources, the current project was extended by four months at no cost. Through intraproject complementarity, the potential financial constraints emanating from, for example, stock feed price fluctuations, and which would have impacted on the attainment of key project outputs and results, were averted.

## FOLLOW-UP FOR GOVERNMENT ATTENTION

It is recommended that follow-up actions build on the achievements of the project interventions, and harness the working relations with the government structures involved.

## SUSTAINABILITY

### 1. Capacity development

For Output 1 (Pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihoods and assets protected, and diets diversified), project interventions were aligned to and implemented within the framework of the 2018/19 Drought Response Plan; while for the sustainability of the project outcome, especially under Output 2 (Access to, and availability of water resources for agricultural use enhanced), and to ensure budgetary considerations through government programming, the project was designed to be embedded within national programmes aligned to the following policies and strategies: i) Water Supply and Sanitation Policy of 2008; ii) Water Policy for Namibia (2000); iii) Namibia National Sanitation Strategy 2010/11-2014/15; iv) Disaster Risk Management Act 10 of 2012; v) Water Resources Management Act No. 11 of 2013; and vi) Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry's Strategic Plan 2017/18-2021/22.



The unique project implementation arrangement, in which the MAWLR played a vital and leading role to rehabilitate all boreholes, enhanced the Ministry's capacity, while strengthening alliances with the FAO country office. In addition, through this intervention, and working in close collaboration with the MAWLR, the Office of the Prime Minister (in its capacity as the lead government office responsible for disaster risk management and coordination of the drought response plan) created the platform for better coordination of drought-related interventions, thereby strengthening alliances with the FAO country office.

All activities at the local level were led by various government departments in the beneficiary regions, to ensure continuity regarding future borehole repair and/or maintenance work, as well as to link stock feed beneficiaries to other ongoing and future government programmes. In addition, it was envisaged that Water Point Committees (WPCs) would be established, which, once fully capacitated, would be entrusted with the management of the completed boreholes, thereby ensuring community ownership.

## 2. Gender equality

In line with FAO policy, the project ensured that at least 30 percent of stock feed beneficiaries were women-headed households. Furthermore, borehole rehabilitation is, technically, an intervention where both men and women are likely to benefit equally from the rehabilitated water supply infrastructure.

## 3. Environmental sustainability

By ensuring improved access to water along drought-induced livestock migration routes, the project will aid in reducing grazing pressure in areas that are overgrazed, thereby enhancing environmental sustainability in the long term. In addition, the protection of core breeding herds – whose numbers are believed to be within the ecosystem's capacity – is viewed as having a negligible impact on the environment and grazing.

## 4. Human Rights-based Approach (HRBA) – in particular Right to Food and Decent Work

Community participation was enhanced in livestock-based economic activities, including right to food and right to basic services, particularly water. With the right support, the improved access to water will lead to unlocking opportunities for gainful employment (in the case of caretakers for completed water points) and entrepreneurship (in the form of small-scale/backyard gardens for women, People Living With Disabilities[PLWD] and youth) at community and/or household level.



## 5. Technological sustainability

Government involvement will ensure backup support for the technology that was introduced during the project. The solar-powered water abstraction technology is appropriate, as it was requested by the beneficiary communities.

Following the establishment of WPCs, local communities will be capacitated through tailor-made training sessions, to ensure that the installed systems and attendant infrastructure will last longer, while serving community needs. In addition, the tailor-made training provided on LEGS imparted knowledge and enhanced beneficiaries' skills to manage livestock better during periods of feed scarcity and/or drought.

Regarding the ongoing maintenance of completed water points and related infrastructure donated through the project, the MAWLR and beneficiaries alike will have in-house capacity to be able to repair and/or troubleshoot problems as they arise. However, external technical assistance and funding will be required to scale out similar interventions to other communities in need. It is recommended that donor funding be sought for this purpose.

## 6. Economic sustainability

Through lessons learned from this project, a Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)-funded project (OSRO/NAM/002/CHA, "Emergency livelihood support to drought-affected communities in Namibia"), focusing on providing, among other things, hydroponic fodder production systems to drought-affected communities, was formulated and implemented. In addition, despite being a relatively new concept, the installation of solar-powered water abstraction systems presents a cost-effective and sustainable solution to vulnerable beneficiary communities, in that drawing water for livestock or human consumption was made easy and affordable when compared with, for example, the use of the conventional diesel engine and/or the laborious rope and bucket systems. Furthermore, both operational and maintenance costs are minimal in the medium to long term.

## ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS - LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

<b>Expected Impact</b>	<b>Increased resilience of agriculture-based livelihoods and enhanced food security and nutrition within the targeted regions</b>		
<b>Outcome</b>	To protect and restore agricultural production, incomes and assets, and enhance nutritious and diversified diet of the most vulnerable households in times of El Niño-induced climate extremes and stressors		
	<b>Indicator</b>	Improved water infrastructure and restored agricultural production leading to resilient livestock-based livelihoods characterized by increased agricultural incomes and diversified diets.	
	<b>Baseline</b>	0	
	<b>End Target</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 1 200 households.</li> <li>– Rehabilitation of two boreholes.</li> <li>– Procurement of one water bowser (tanker).</li> </ul>	
	<b>Comments and follow-up action to be taken</b>	<p>All project outputs, activities and indicators were achieved, except for the procurement of a water tanker, as summarized in the sections below. A total of 2 400 households was reached through the provision of survival stock feed, with nearly 16 000 large stock equivalents (core breeding herds) and associated livelihoods protected from devastating drought.</p> <p>The project drew benefits from fruitful collaboration with the MAWLR, the Directorate of Disaster Risk Management (DDRM) in the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and regional councils, as all these partners played various important roles during the implementation of the project and beyond. Follow-up interventions should build on the achievements of the interventions and harness the working relations with the stated government structures.</p>	
<b>Output 1</b>			
Pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihoods and assets protected, and diets diversified			
<b>Output 1</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
	Restored agricultural production leading to resilient livelihoods characterized by increased agricultural incomes, and diversified diets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 1 200 households.</li> <li>– Sets of awareness and surveillance materials/kits procured.</li> <li>– 20 agricultural extension workers trained.</li> </ul>	Yes
<b>Baseline</b>	0		
<b>Comments</b>	All planned activities and indicator targets were achieved, as summarized below.		
<b>Activity 1.1</b>	Provision of salt licks and supplementary feeding targeting the core breeding herds		
	<b>Achieved</b>	Yes	
	<b>Comments</b>	<p>Following the initial sensitization and identification of beneficiaries, 180 tonnes of multinutrient blocks and 180 tonnes of nutritious lucerne hay were procured and distributed to 2 400 beneficiaries (400 each in Erongo, Kunene and Otjozondjupa, and 1 200 in Omaheke), to protect approximately 16 000 core breeding herds. The total number of beneficiaries reached was double the envisaged target, as the Government decided to halve the quantities distributed from six bales of hay and six multinutrient blocks to three of each per household, in order to reach more people affected and in need.</p> <p>Effective local-level coordination mechanisms spearheaded by the Office of Regional Governors, and working in close collaboration with traditional leaders and MAWLR, ensured the timely distribution of supplementary feeds to targeted beneficiaries in most focal regions. In Kunene, transportation challenges led to minor delays in the final distribution of stock feed to beneficiaries, which was resolved when the regional council, with support from DDRM, provided trucks to ease these challenges.</p>	
<b>Activity 1.2</b>	Provision of awareness and surveillance material, diagnostic kits, equipment, vaccines/drugs and protective gear associated with El Niño-precipitated Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADs)		
	<b>Achieved</b>	Yes	
	<b>Comments</b>	<p>This was achieved through the provision of resources (USD 18 974.60) from the complementary OSRO project, OSRO/SFS/801/USA. Prior to the initiation of procurement, stock feed prices had escalated significantly, on account of high demand incurred by drought and poor availability of feeds in the region. As a result, and in order to ensure that more funds were made available for the procurement of stock feed, all the required awareness/surveillance material, diagnostic kits, equipment, vaccines/drugs and protective gear (mainly for anthrax) were procured by the OSRO project, OSRO/SFS/801/USA.</p>	

<b>Activity 1.3</b>	Tailor-made capacity building trainings on livestock best practices and management e.g. Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS), Good Emergency Management Practices (GEMP), etc.		
	<b>Achieved</b>	Yes	
	<b>Comments</b>	Thirty-nine agricultural extension workers were trained (10-18 September 2019) on LEGS. Upon returning to their respective duty stations and regions, and with support from FAO, the trained extension workers conducted community-level Farmer Information Days to support the Government to roll out the 2019/2020 Drought Response Plan, while contributing to the long-term resilience building efforts at community level. In addition, the project supported the awareness raising and training of 35 government officials on IPC, including drafting a road map for the first rollout of IPC-based reporting in Namibia.	
<b>Output 2</b>	Access to, and availability of water resources for agricultural use enhanced		
	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
	Improved water infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Rehabilitation of two boreholes.</li> <li>– Procurement of one water bowser (tanker).</li> </ul>	<b>Partially</b>
<b>Baseline</b>	0		
<b>Comments</b>	Only one of the two planned activities was achieved, as explained below.		
<b>Activity 2.1</b>	Rehabilitation and/or construction of boreholes		
	<b>Achieved</b>	Yes	
	<b>Comments</b>	Following the identification of sites to be rehabilitated (as informed by the expressed needs of target communities), and the successful procurement of all required materials, MAWLR artisans rehabilitated two boreholes along drought-induced livestock migration routes in Kunene. Despite initial delays, owing to the inconsistent delivery of borehole materials by the supplier, both sites were eventually completed and now serve as important sources of clean drinking water to both livestock and human beings.	
<b>Activity 2.2</b>	Procurement of one water bowser (tanker)		
	<b>Achieved</b>	No	
	<b>Comments</b>	This activity was cancelled, as funds were not sufficient to cover the procurement of a water tanker. However, the above-mentioned complementary project, OSRO/NAM/601/ROK, as part of its core outputs, ensured that eight more boreholes were rehabilitated and four traditional wells were upgraded (to solar-powered pumping systems), to meet the needs of the communities in the targeted regions, including Kunene.	

**Partnerships and Outreach**

For more information, please contact: [Reporting@fao.org](mailto:Reporting@fao.org)

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