



CROSS-BORDER PROGRAMMING FOR THE FUTURE

Building Stronger Coordination Systems and Responsive Border Institutions for Efficiency and Results

TECHNICAL BRIEF 4

March 2020

BACKGROUND

“In these extraordinary times, greater international cooperation is needed to reverse the global economic down turn, eradicate poverty, promote security and enhance cultural understanding,” Klaus Schwab, Founder, World Economic Forum.

The borderlands between Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia have long been a zone of poverty and insecurity due to harsh environmental conditions, intra- and inter-community conflict and government neglect. The increase of natural shocks, the escalation of cross-border attacks, displacement due to climatic and conflict factors, and the flow of illegal weapons and ammunition have made these borderlands a crucial focus for programmes that promote regional stability and reduce forced displacement.

The Mandera triangle has only two official crossing points: Dolo Ado (Ethiopia) – Dollow (Somalia) and Mandera (Kenya) - Belet Hawa (Somalia). Only one

of the two crossing points, (Dollow-Dolo Ado) is officially opened and operational. The crossing point between Mandera and Belet Hawa has been closed since 2007; however informal movement was tolerated with security forces requesting bribes from people crossing and transporting goods. In May 2019, the border closure at Belet Hawa was further enforced; however, goods still come to Mandera town from Somalia. In September 2019, a major structural change happened as Kenya’s immigration office moved from Mandera to Wajir, 350Km from the closed crossing point.

The BORESHA project is implemented in this cross-border area and focuses on the communities that cross the borders for transhumant pastoralism, access to services, trade and for maintaining socio-cultural relationships. However, the restrictions have also frustrated collaborations between the immigration offices of the three countries in addition to presenting challenges for project implementation.



About BORESHA & DDG

Building Opportunities for Resilience in the Horn of Africa (BORESHA) is a 3-year (2018-2020) cross-border project implemented by a consortium of the Danish Refugee Council, World Vision, WYG and CARE International with funding from European Union Trust Fund for Africa. BORESHA works with local communities and public authorities to establish transformative processes to enhance the cross-border socio-economic integration and support resilience in the fragile and underdeveloped borderland areas between Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia also called the Mandera Triangle.

This technical brief was produced through a collaborative workshop between BORESHA and the Danish Demining Group (DDG), a Humanitarian Mine Action and Armed Violence Reduction Unit within the Danish Refugee Council (DRC).

JUSTIFICATION

The cross-border environment presents a dynamic context for the different actors - authorities, duty bearers, business community, local communities - and requires collective effort in delivering common goals and objectives of building resilience. Communities living in these borderlands are (geographically and socio-culturally) removed from the central government and they also hold deep grievances towards the state due to historical injustices, and the contemporary use of violence and intimidation by state forces. The lack of trust between the governments and the communities is a major obstacle in the cross-border areas, coupled with slow implementation of existing cross-border policies. Despite these challenges and dynamics, borderlands remain vibrant and indispensable for achieving resilience and development of these areas. Additionally, cross-border programming presents an opportunity towards accelerating stability in the area.

TECHNICAL APPROACH

BORESHA developed a comprehensive system and structure to effectively work at the multiple levels in different countries and to navigate the national policies, regional policies, and customary practices to deliver the cross-border programming.

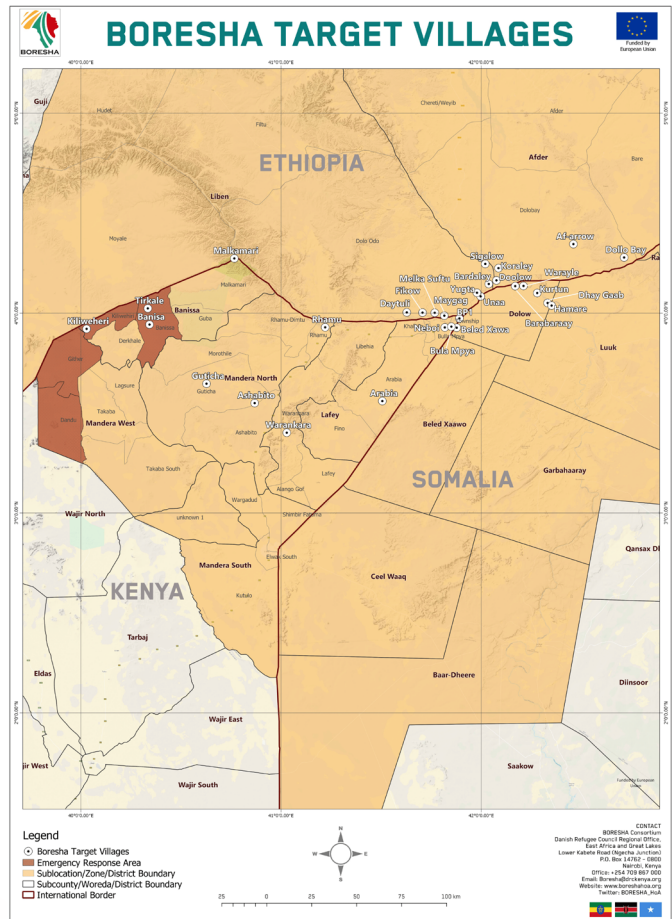
Cross-border Coordination and Communication Systems and Structures

The consortium partners agreed on governance and coordination structure (Figure 2) and the division of roles and responsibilities across the different countries.

A Project Management Unit (PMU) is responsible for the management of the overall project. It promotes effective coordination and communications both vertically (from the frontline implementers to the director in-charge of strategic decisions), and horizontally (across counties in the same thematic areas and across the different program themes).

The Technical Working Group (TWG) provides technical programme support to the implementation of the programme. It ensures that field teams align to the project objectives of each consortium partner and the bigger project goal. TWG draws membership from all consortium partners.

Technical Implementation Groups (TIG) are three subgroups one in each country. TIGs consist of the staff members of consortium partners based and working in the project areas.



The Steering Committee (SC) provides strategic direction to the consortium and ensures that partner specific challenges are discussed at the highest level in the organisation and necessary actions taken. Country and Regional Directors of the different consortium partners sit in the steering committee.

Thematic Working Group such as the Quality Assurance, Finance, Communication, Security network ensure proper engagement of all partners in the different processes of the intervention. They provide technical in-depth analysis of the project components for improved outcomes.

Use of technology

BORESHA used communication platforms such as Skype and Whatsapp to conduct regular monthly meetings, to exchange videos and pictures of activities. This helped sustain information exchange and coordination against the imposed border movement restrictions. The project is exploring virtual exchange options to enable peer communication at village level where communication infrastructures are limited. Some mobile networks are functioning across the border at relatively low costs, and communities are already using them for cross-border communications. In addition, BORESHA is setting up a short message service (SMS)-based cross-border market information system to enhance informal commercial activities.

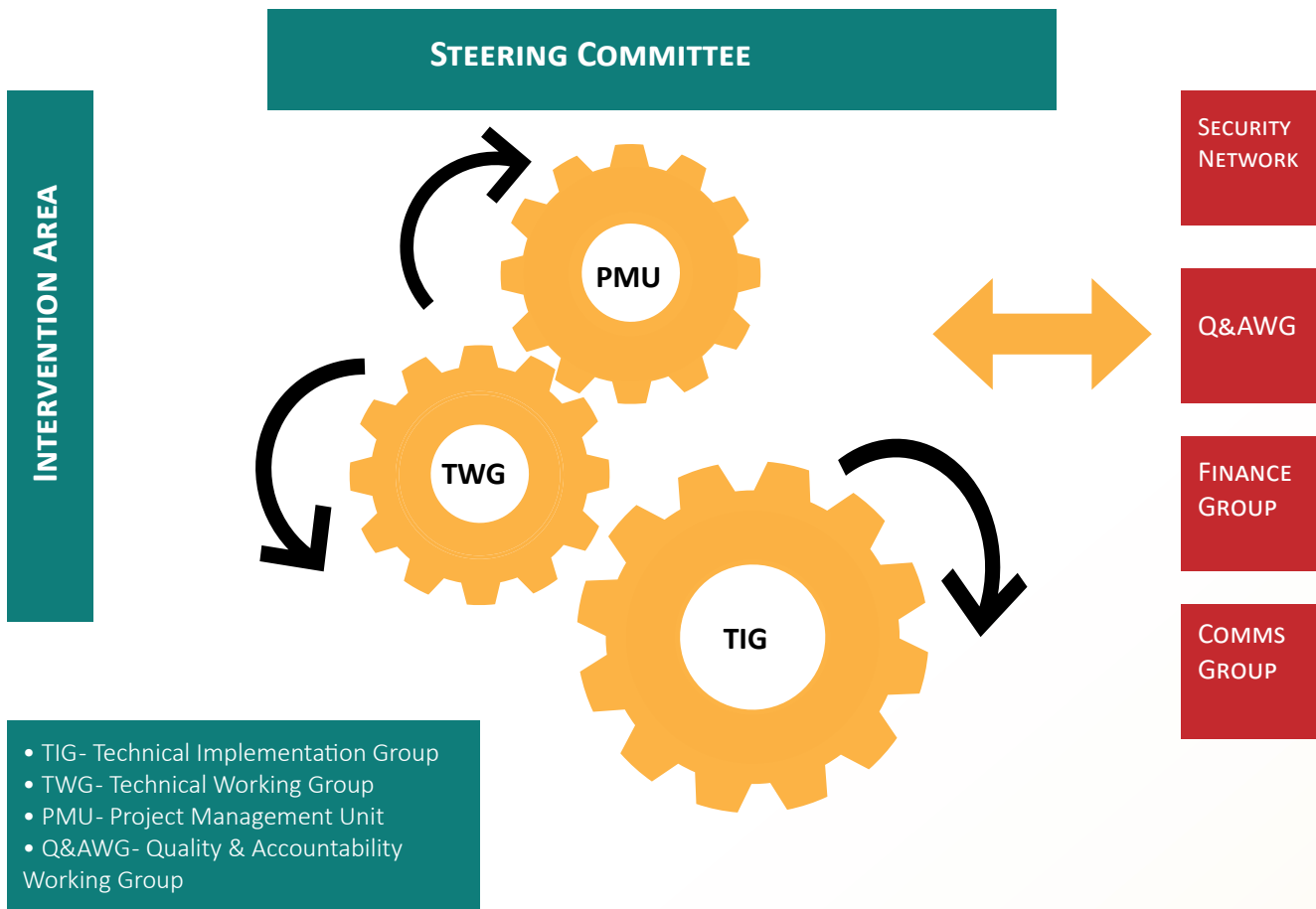


Figure 2: BORESHA Governance & Coordination Structure

Adaptive programming

The fragile and unstable cross-border areas are prone to multiple hazards, long-term displacement and harmful out-migration. The fragile and unstable cross-border areas are prone to multiple hazards, long-term displacement and harmful out-migration. Additional multiple stresses such as recurrent droughts and frequent floods also drive violent conflicts and instability. BORESHA is developing capacity of the community to mitigate against these stresses.

The program has facilitated the establishment of multiple community-based groups (disaster risk reduction committees, NRM committees, LCIG -live-stock interest groups committees, and VSLA – village saving and loan associations) to sustain program learning and improvement towards enhanced economic development and resilience.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

Linkage with RASMI

The targeted cross-border area is characterized by increasingly protracted conflict, and frequent and intense climate-related shocks, both contributing to a cycle of vulnerability. BORESHA in collaboration with RASMI implemented several activities to support cross-border conflict management and peace building in addition to better resource coordination across the border lines.

Linkage with Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD)

IGAD as a Regional Economic Community (REC) is playing a key role in promoting a number of cross-border policies to enhance resilience and promote stability and economic development in the region. BORESHA collaborates with IGAD at the following multiple levels:

- Structural collaboration with the Support for effective Cooperation and Coordination of the Cross-border Initiative (SECCCI) project focusing

on high-level cross-border cooperation and coordination.

- Programmatic collaboration for the disease surveillance with the IGAD Centre for Pastoralism and Livestock Development (ICPALD)
- IGAD's Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) to establish Cross-border Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (CPMR) Platforms for Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia organised by CEWARN.

Private sector support

BORESHA recognised the socio-economic dynamics of the area and how the local population use markets, labour opportunities, and services across the border area. The project conducted Cross-border Labour Market Assessment and a Cross-border Value Chain Analysis to structure the support to the private sector (grants to support entrepreneurs, Business Development Centres services, TVET activities, Trade and Economic Development Tri-border Committee), and respond to the challenges and opportunities in the area.

RESULTS

Enhanced communication and coordination Communication took place across hierarchy and peers. Regular meetings and use of communication platforms played a central role in cross-border implementation and learning across the project. The flow of communication enabled the teams in the different countries to coordinate project activities and make decisions that respond to the dynamics of those across the borders. BORESHA used this approach across the components of the project — to support entrepreneurs with a grant facility, harmonize the criteria for selecting youth sponsored for technical and vocational training, harmonized training and awareness campaign in natural resource management related topics, liaising fodder producers in Ethiopia with clients in Somalia and in facilitating Community, and Vulnerability Assessment processes among others.

In 2018, when more than 10,000 households moved from Ethiopia into Kenya due to conflict escalation in Moyale, BORESHA Consortium was able to carry out a harmonised emergency response in the first quarter of 2019 to respond to this unconventional displacement. Later in the year, in response to the

low performance of the 2019 long raining season 'Gu', BORESHA activated the contingency funds and coordinated to scale up early response drought activities in the three countries.

Improved policy environment

The collaboration with ICPALD/IGAD resulted in an MOU to operationalize the Implementation Framework on Cross-Border Animal Health and Sanitary Interventions in Kenya and Ethiopia. BORESHA and ICPALD jointly supported the validation of the Protocol for information sharing on cross-border animal health and sanitary measures between Ethiopia and Kenya, and Training and awareness on harmonised disease surveillance, vaccination and reporting. These processes enabled the veterinary services from Kenya and Ethiopia to work together and reach important technical agreements. Participants to the processes were representing the central and federal governments, the 3 regions (Somali, Oromia and SNNP), the 4 counties (Mandera, Wajir, Marsabit and Turkana) along the Kenya Ethiopia border.

Emergency- resilience-conflict nexus programming

In 2018, conflict in Dawa zone in Ethiopia resulted in displacement of over 10,000 households across the border into Kenya. The consortium partners conducted a rapid assessment in collaboration with the Mandera County Government and used the findings to mobilize resources to support the affected households with critical health, water, sanitation and hygiene, education, shelter and protection services. In 2019, BORESHA in Kenya was the only actor beside the Mandera County and the local community able to access the area and raise funds to deliver an emergency intervention in Mandera West and Banissa for this unconventional displacement. When the project areas received below average rain performance in April-May 2019, BORESHA engaged in a conversation with the Donor (EU) to mobilize resources from the contingency fund to scale up relevant interventions to mitigate the effects of the progressing drought and to prevent losing the gains from resilience building.



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Towards peace building and resilience

BORESHA collaborated with RASMI to support cross-border conflict management and peace building initiatives. The two projects conducted peace-building meetings that brought together pastoralists from Dolo-Ado-Ethiopia and Dolow-Somalia, this meeting provided opportunity for participants to dialogue, identify conflicts hotspots, discuss coexistence during scarce resources occasioned by drought, and put in place mechanisms for addressing misunderstandings before it escalates to violence. RASMI and BORESHA collaborated and conducted a Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) process with the communities from Malkamari-Kenya and Mubarak-Ethiopia. BORESHA and RASMI also collaborated in enrolling 15 youth into vocational training such as mechanics, tailoring, and livelihood activities to productively engage them and improve security in the area.

CHALLENGES

Restriction of cross-border movements affected a number of project activities including inability for DRR groups to have the planned exchange visits, Joint training for NRM which had to be conducted separately in each country; Tri-border trade business committee which had to be conducted at country level; Joint cross-border coordination with local administration was not possible due to political tensions between Kenya and Somalia, and parallel coordination systems with the respective local authorities were established at country level instead; and, planned scholarship for youth from Somalia to attend training in institutions in Mandera Kenya was not possible. It also affected organisation exchange visits and joint quarterly meetings between BORESHA and local Government authorities.

Because of challenges with formal cross-border coordination, BORESHA established country based processes

to engage the local administrations using TIG/TWG monthly meetings and quarterly meetings with local authorities as part of an integrated system. The project used monthly reporting in Somalia to Jubaland State, regular participation in the County Steering Group (CSG) meetings in Kenya, quarterly meeting at regional level in Jijiga in Ethiopia, and further discussion to coordinate at zonal level.

Unsuccessful efforts to engage national governments and IGAD to formally recognize the need for cross-border movement and get support for the project (precedent with PEACE III project on a sort of special pass) affected the pace and implementation of key deliverables.

Increased activities of AL Shabaab militia in the intervention areas resulted in higher insecurity, higher tension, and more limitations in accessing and moving in the area.

Man-made and natural disasters such as drought and floods affected the area and threatened the gains made. With no inbuilt crisis modifier that support faster early response to shocks, and responsive to the existing grant agreement, BORESHA had to navigate multiple administrative processes and mobilize external resources for the response thus increasing workload for the whole team and delaying the action.

The four BORESHA consortium partners have different structures in each of the three countries. The independent country structure resulted in neighbouring teams in Dolo Ado, Mandera and Dollow reporting along their country lines to managers in Addis Ababa, Nairobi and Mogadishu respectively. These management offices are far from border areas and detached from each other thus affecting efficient coordination and implementation. Additionally, each partner in each country tended to use

tested approaches and methodologies. Significant effort went into converging this rich variety of approaches into a consortium approach tailored for the cross-border area. However, the trade-off between countries and partners created some confusion resulting in varied pace of implementation.

LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy level: Numerous obstacles mentioned as being of legal and administrative nature are seen as stemming from a general lack of both awareness and information concerning 'life' on the other side of the border. Working towards enhancing cross-border life is a long process, the fact that community de facto live their informal life is a starting point, but it needs to be a discussion engaging many more actors at multiple level for an effective and positive change. It is crucial to engage at national level to lobby for more exchanges of information and coordination at cross-border level. In addition, there are a number of cross-border MOU between countries and at IGAD level, but often there is no awareness in the local administration and communities about them. It is important to build awareness in the border areas about the existing agreements, and relevant legal frameworks at IGAD regional level.

Complexity in cross-border programming: the numerous stakeholders, the different country based legal and administrative systems, the articulate co-

ordination structures necessary to deliver cross-border programming, and the numerous shocks affecting the borderland should all be clearly defined and mapped. This will inform project setup that is context responsive interventions that balances with beneficiary expectations.

Local administration though supportive of cross-border programming harbour personal interests and are also caught up between balancing, political, economic, security, and community dynamics. These come with unnecessary procedures that affect access to services for the community. The enhancement of data exchange at local administration level could simplify procedures, and shorten lengthy procedures of movement and seeking services.

Use of technology has the potential to open up opportunities for better cross-border coordination, conflict sensitive analysis and response, and planning and implementation in cross-border work. More options of virtual information sharing and innovations should be explored.

Adaptive programming ensures all community institutions for example NRM Committees are equipped to allow for early response and recovery after a crisis. This provides the flexibility to adjust to emerging changes and sustain gains in building community resilience.

Conclusion

The intervention results show some quick wins and good progress towards realisation of the project goal. The project proves that even with many challenges, it is possible to achieve tangible and life transforming results. While institutional engagement is challenging and institutions are often affected by the political dynamics, efforts to strengthen these institutions towards stability is a first inroad to reducing conflicts and associated vulnerabilities.

Coordination within the BORESHA project however took longer, has laid the foundation for effective implementation and accountability to the donor, partners, and beneficiaries. The focused adaptive learning approach within the project and capacity to be flexible and change course is more critical in a complex context such as the Manderu Triangle. It is however emerging that higher level national and regional engagement should have presence within the local set up to promote policy understanding and implementations.

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This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union and DANIDA. Its contents are the sole responsibility of BORESHA Consortium and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union or DANIDA.

Funded by



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