MIDTERM EVALUATION

**Project Title:** Strengthening Resilience of Agro-pastoralist and Pastoralists in Kajiado and Narok Counties, Kenya

**Project No:** KEN 1134

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**Improved pasture production**

**Improved Nutrition knowledge and practices**

**A resilient community**

**Enhanced capacity of milk producers**

**Increased market returns for livestock sales**

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By Right Track Africa

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Executive summary
Local communities in Narok and Kajiado Counties of Kenya are well known for their pastoralism. They face rising levels of vulnerability from a number of mutually reinforcing factors – environmental, social and economic. Starting from 2016, Neighbours Initiative Alliance (NIA) and Welthungerhilfe Kenya (WHH-K) have been implementing a project in the two counties: “Strengthening Resilience of Agro-pastoralist and Pastoralists in Kajiado and Narok Counties”. In January 2019, NIA and WHH commissioned a midterm evaluation of the project to assess its performance and draw lessons that can be used to plan and implement Phase 2 of the project. A team from Right Track Africa Ltd conducted the evaluation.

The evaluation objectives and questions in the ToR were reviewed with the primary users to guide the identification of uses, data collection and analysis. Data was collected between February and May 2019, using a combination of report reviews, household surveys, focus group discussions and informant interviews.

Main findings
Relevance
The mission of the NIA Pastoralists Resilience project is in line with national governments commitment in building partnerships to achieve resilience among pastoralist communities (USAID, 2018). The focus on women empowerment was also in line with County government priorities (Kajiado CIDP, 2013 & Narok CIDP, 2018). The KEN 1134 is aligned to the Kenya Health Policy (2012-2030), Kenya Community Health Strategy, National and Counties Food and Nutrition Security Policy, National and Counties Health Strategic Plans, National and Counties Nutrition Action Plans. Nutrition project fits well with the national and counties policies and strategic plans. Support to milk production and market was pertinent given a historical poor dairy market structures in the two counties. The project linked milk production groups to dairy cooperatives. Livestock production and marketing is a basic livelihood activity, and steer fattening groups were supported to develop the practice as a major income generating activity (IGA). Pasture conservation and storage are crucial for pastoralist livelihoods.

Effectiveness
The project worked mainly through ‘software’ approaches of awareness, trainings and exposure tours. For the health and nutrition component, the project had planned to carry out education forums on food diversification targeting 40 female health workers. By the time of the evaluation, they had reached 52 (130%) because there were more than 2 health workers per participating facility. The project only trained 3% of the health extension personnel (supervisors of CHVs).
targeted on nutrition (mainly due to lack of community health extension personnel), 60 Community Health Volunteers (CHVs) and 52 nurses-in-charge directly. Following the trainings there was evidence of extensive awareness and application in the community. The survey of the target/project households observed achievements in breastfeeding, infant nutrition, antenatal care for pregnant women, and personal hygiene. The key challenge in food diversity is frequent droughts and poor incomes that affect the acquisition of a wider variety of foods.

The highest achievement was the number of households integrated into milk value chains. The target was around 300 participants but more than 3,800 were taken through animal husbandry, milk handling and hygiene, record keeping, basic business skills, milk processing, marketing, acquiring of investment capital etc. This was due to large number of households required to supply volumes of milk sufficient for viable collection by dairy processors (newly established market linkages).

The project sought to increase and sustain market returns for livestock sales for 20 steer fattening producer groups. A key outcome is the increased knowledge and awareness among project group members on proper fattening, animal husbandry practices, value chain development, livestock marketing and use of service providers. The biggest hindrance was inadequate capital by members buy stock, fatten and sell at profit.

There was a significant increase in the proportion of households practicing fodder production. Over 90% of the households of beneficiaries sampled are practicing conservation/ fodder planting compared to baseline levels of only 2% and 11%, in Kajiado and Narok, respectively. A major success was the use of conserved fodder during drought.

Efficiency and accountability
Project resources were received, used and accounted for regularly through annual returns to WHH-K. Utilization targets were achieved in the first two years, with most of the budget lines are spent at rates between 80% and 100%. The key challenges on the budget were per diem and personnel costs that were insufficiently budgeted. WHH-K and NIA teams have agreed to reduce per diem rates and use of lower cost accommodation services in Phase 2. The project’s outputs were delivered cost efficiently by combining multiple field activities and strategic route planning.

Impact
Generally, around 9,000 people have directly benefited in Phase 1 of the NIA Pastoralists Resilience Project, which is about 42% of the target beneficiaries. Of this about 6,640 (74%) are women benefitting from nutrition and milk production interventions. The average monthly
income for the direct beneficiaries was KES 14,087 and KES 10,071 in Kajiado and Narok respectively. This is higher than what was reported earned by the control group – KES 11,700 and 11,463, respectively. The improved capacity of groups has led to stable and stronger communities, with a strong cohesion based on joint income generating activities (IGAs) and the ‘merry-go-round’ table banking¹.

Communities supported with nutrition education appreciated being reached through the Mother-to-Mother support groups in health facilities and communities. Health facility personnel also reported that there were fewer clinic visits defaulters, especially among group members. The establishment of kitchen gardens in targeted households contributed to diversified diets. Food insecurity in the project sites reduced from a baseline of 78% of the households reporting to 69%, with the control group maintaining the same proportion of households reporting (77.4%). Pasture production and conservation as a drought contingency improved resilience, resulting in fewer animal deaths and reduced migration in search of pasture. The project increased and stabilized milk catchment areas for the serving dairy cooperatives. An analysis of the project’s success indicators (MSIs²) shows that 3 out of 10 persons (30%) reported increase in cash incomes, 9 out of 10 women (90%) feel they are able to influence community level decision-making, and 6 out of 10 households (60%) reported an increase in food diversity.

The project suffered major setback following the 2017 drought that resulted in migration of pastoralists, loss of livestock, and interfered with milk production and pasture-development.

**Recommendations for Phase Two**

**Project theme integration**

There is the need to integrate the different Result Areas for the same community groups. Food security and nutrition issues should be a priority for all households and there is a strong relationship in the Result Areas of milk production, steer fattening and pasture conservation.

**Planning, partnerships and community engagement**

There is need to strengthen group activities that promote unity and sustainability. The ‘merry-go-round’ table banking and income generating activities (IGAs) supported group cohesion and conflict management. The project’s primary intervention approach was awareness creation and trainings. The project needs to use a participatory approach (together with the groups) to

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¹ Informal group-run savings and credit arrangements
² MSI = Measuring Success Indicators
develop an acceptable calendar of activities that would ensure maximum attendance by both men and women

**Sustainability through ASAL hazards**
Given the fragility of the environment and un-predictable trends with climate and weather, the project should consider strengthening community-based early warning systems. Destocking-restocking needs to feature prominently in Phase 2 of the project, and captured as part of Drought Contingency Plan (DCP), with hazard stages linked to the seasonal calendar. The project could introduce banks/livestock insurance linkages to support smooth livestock destocking and restocking processes (mitigation and recovery phases). The project should promote basic water harvesting techniques such as water ponds, community dams, buried PVC and other water harvesting innovations taking into account influential pull factors.

**For nutrition and health**
NIA should focus their support based on the BFCl guidelines of forming community based Mother-to-Mother groups. NIA should map out relevant sites for water availability and supply, especially during the drought before establishing the kitchen gardens. The trainings on infant/children feeding should cover all children from 0 years to 5 years.

**For milk production and marketing**
The project can promote introduction of improved breeds through working with breed researchers such as KARLO. Introduction of dairy types suited to the local arid context can be done gradually through controlled artificial insemination (AI) services or adopting the *Heifer* (transfer) *Model* (where the members of a group contribute and buy heifers for each other). The project needs to promote mechanisms for storing evening milk transport to the cooperatives. There is also lack of diversified markets for milk, the only option being the cooperatives, whose collection centres are sometimes inaccessible during rainy seasons. The project should consider organising the local milk value chains as alternatives to the cooperatives.

**For forage production and conservation**
A clear out-scaling strategy should be established involving model farmers and community resource persons so that effective fodder production extends to more households. Trainings and monitoring knowledge application should ensure standardized forage production. The

1 BFCl = Baby Friendly Community Initiative
2 KARLO = Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation
inadequate supply of fodder harvesting and baling machinery is an investment opportunity for the project’s pasture groups

**For steer fattening and trade**
The project needs to support the steer groups by boosting their investment capability. The groups can be linked to potential financiers. The project needs to ensure pasture production for drought contingency go hand in hand with steer fattening. The project should also consider introducing and/or developing standardized feeding regimes for more uniform growth and fattening of selected animals. The projects needs to create more effective market links, working with Livestock Market Associations (LMAs) or linking the groups to lucrative end-market traders, processors or exporters.

**Policy implication**
Sustainability of projects (and their benefits) takes place through up-scaling models. This is where adoption is through upstream County policies, strategies and plans (e.g. the CIDPs) so that the goals and objectives reach a wider set of communities as a policy-based governance and administrative objective. This required a continuous sharing of key lessons from the project between NIA and government stakeholders with clear documentation (published e.g. in County bulletins).

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