

EXTERNAL EVALUATION

AUGUST 2013

Program to restore food production and livelihoods of populations affected by the conflict in Dungu Territory, Haut Uele



Funded by
USAID

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List of acronyms

AAH	-	Action Against Hunger
ACF	-	Action Contre la Faim
CBO	-	Community Based Organization
CD	-	Country Director
CFW	-	Cash for work
DAC	-	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
ER	-	Economic Recovery
FARD	-	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo
FC	-	Field Coordinator
FGD	-	Focus Group Discussion
FS	-	Food Security
FSL	-	Food Security Livestock
HAP	-	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
HH	-	Household
HoM	-	Head of Mission
HQ	-	Head Quarters
IDP	-	Internally Displaced Persons
IGA	-	Income Generation Activity
INSO	-	International NGO Safety Organization
ITAPEL	-	Inspection Territoriale Agriculture, Pêche et Elevage
LF	-	Logical Framework
LRA	-	Lord Resistance Army

MONUSCO	-	Mission de l’Organisation des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation en RD Congo
MOU	-	Memorandum/a of Understanding
NGO	-	Non Governmental Organization
OCHA	-	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affair
OFDA	-	Office Foreign Disaster Assistance
PM	-	Project Manager
PU	-	Première Urgence
SOV	-	Source of Verifications
SWOT	-	Strength Weakness Opportunity Threats
TOR	-	Terms of Reference
UNHAS	-	United Nations Humanitarian Aviation Service
WFP	-	World Food Program

Acknowledgements

The evaluator wish to thanks sincerely the PM and the project team in Dungu for their key contribution to the collection of relevant information in the narrow timing available for the mission. Thank you to all ACF staff from the field, to the Regional and Country Coordination and to the Head Quarter for their major contribution to the definition of evaluation’s findings and lessons learned. It was great to meet a team so professional, committed and working in an atmosphere of excellent collaboration.

Executive Summary

This report was commissioned by ACF-UK to evaluate the OFDA \$1,240,000 funded action *AID-OFDA-G-12-00180* implemented from August 1st 2012 to July 31st 2013. The context of operation is the southern part of Dungu health zone in the Haut Uele district, located in Oriental Province in the Democratic Republic of the Congo where more than 120.000 IDPs moved to seek shelter from conflicts due to armed attacks from LRA and unknown groups. The project aimed to restore food production and livelihoods for 25.200 individuals (10080 IDPs) affected by the conflict in Dungu Territory and it is based on the AAH findings of a deep assessment performed by in 2011 as well as on the ACF long term strategy and knowledge of the Uele area since 2009. The action has a food security and an early recovery component to enhance food self-sufficiency and access to market in the localities southern of Dungu along the axes Dungu-Ndedu, Ndedu-Afu and Ndedu-Ibu. Food security component supports 1,750 Households (14,000 Individuals) benefiting from seed systems /agricultural input activities and 400 Households (3,200 individuals) benefiting from fisheries activities. The Economic Recovery and Market system component backings the rehabilitation of 6 market infrastructure, 25 km road and 4 bridges using the CFW for 900 Households; moreover, it funds 100 Households grouped in 10 economic associations for IGA. A broader number of beneficiaries should be considered as the users of infrastructures rehabilitated.

The field assessment for this evaluation took place between July 9 and 27 2013, during the last weeks of the project implementation, to study the impact, effectiveness and efficacy of the program as well as the engagement of the key local stakeholders. Evaluation methodology is based on the ACF Utilization – Focused Framework, using the OECD-DAC criteria and merging Monitoring and Cross-cutting issues as recommended by ACF. The main outputs are a first debriefing in the field of implementation (Dungu), a learning workshop held in the ACF East Coordination office in Bukavu at the end of the field mission and this Evaluation Report, developed following the review of main findings discussed with ACF staff concerned in the field and at the headquarter.

This program was wide and generally significant though it suffered from two main constraints: a) some inaccuracy of needs assessment and means/costs evaluation carried out at proposal stage b) delays in launching the project and in distributing the goods to the field. Although the challenges, in part addressed with a flexible reorientation of the strategy, expected results have been overall achieved according to the Logical Framework indicators.

ACF-US is a solid organization part of ACF-International, its **Efficiency** relies on good staff capacities, sectors' knowledge and well developed procedures for the management of resources. Logistic and financial processes are consistent and efficient to assure transparence in purchasing and funds management, as well as proficient financial monitoring. The OFDA project was yet implemented during a process of revision of the DRC country coordination system and the organization chart, and it was in some measure affected by the integration of the new decision making process. Delays in the project start up and goods distribution to field had influenced the cost efficiency causing an increase in costs of social infrastructures rehabilitations.

The ACF operation is **relevant** in addressing the needs and the causes of vulnerability enhancing production and economic capacity of the population living in the targeted vulnerable and scarcely assisted area. The project strategy combined immediate relief to the most vulnerable with capacity building of producers and actors of economic development, thus addressing urgent needs as well as deeper causes of food insecurity. Inputs given to agriculture and fishery are appropriate and welcomed by the communities, addressing the two main priorities of tools distribution and introduction of sustainable innovative techniques.

Examining the project design, the evaluation found some inaccuracy due to the lack of **community participation** at this stage, which limited the identification of existing coping strategies then not combined with the project methodology and approach. This also restricted the extent of the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries understanding of targeting strategies and selection criteria. Needs in rehabilitation of infrastructures identified at proposal stage had as well to be reviewed during the implementation according to communities' recommendations.

The narrow involvement of communities in the project design was made up for their consistent implication in the project reorientation and implementation. The collaboration with the leaders was nevertheless challenging and preventing from a veritable community ownership and empowerment, due to the local weakness of social cohesion and commitment in pursuing durable benefits on behalf of the whole population. Effectiveness of **Community Based Organizations** in assuring the management of infrastructures and the handover of services was extremely limited and the project's **Connectedness** was relying mainly on the collaboration with Institutional Actors. The project developed consistent partnerships with the most relevant Institutional Local Stakeholder thus scaling up durability. **Coherence** was also assured by the ACF active participation to the Clusters Humanitarian Coordination.

Although the challenges, project **Effectiveness** was adequate and significant achievements have been made in reaching the most of the activities targets. According to the database available, goods and services had been delivered to the whole target population. Examining **food security**, indicators are overall fulfilled and a veritable increasing of productions is achieved introducing durable equipment and innovative still sustainable agricultural techniques. The evaluation found that working in associations (e.g. farmers and anglers) scales up consolidation of technical achievements, improves the ownership and facilitates beneficiaries contribution to strategies review; on the contrary, selection of individual vulnerable HHs is extremely challenging in terms of implementation and monitoring, with limited results.

Economic recovery rehabilitation of markets, roads and bridges is accomplished and these are capital activities effectively improving access to markets and reducing segregation. The handover to community/local stakeholders for maintenance and management is nevertheless a chief challenge for emergency short operations; strategy and ad hoc solutions should be devised from the project beginning, which cannot do without working on good governance.

Examining the **IGA**, the evaluation found limited achievements in relation to the high investment per beneficiary. Member's understanding of the economic associations arrangement is a challenge as well as the utilization of economic assets, which are in most of the cases in the hands of one or two association's participants. Lack of community sensitization has led to the emergence of strains making even more challenging the implementation of this activity.

The overall good **Impact** of the operation was achieved thanks to project outreach of isolated areas and communities and to the synergy of the two sectors of the intervention in improving population livelihood patterns. However, the inadequate ownership of CBO is still a challenge at the project end. **Monitoring** of impact could only be improved using ad hoc indicators to be devised at the proposal stage, identifying as well appropriate sources of verification. A consistent system of feedback and complaint mechanisms from community has also to be merged to develop a timely understanding of field situation and challenges.

In **conclusion**, ACF developed a solid model of integration of food security and economic recovery, although the achievements are rather different for the two sectors. The agricultural and fisheries inputs, though the challenges of seasonality, assure increased food productions, despite substantial differences between individual households or associations. Rehabilitations of markets, though properly achieved, is not effective

in assuring economic recovery as community ownership is limited and the producers’ associations are not involved in management. Accomplished roads infrastructures allow the reduction of isolation, but is likely to be temporary, as maintenance is not assured. CFW succeeded an immediate relief to the most vulnerable; a durable economic recovery is on the contrary not realized, as IGA strategy didn’t fit the local context. Nevertheless, the projects achievements are relevant considering the challenges of the context, the size of the operation and the limited timing for its implementation.

1. Background information

1.1 Operational context

The Dungu territory in the Haut Uele region have been affected since 2008 by violent attacks on the civil population continuously perpetrated by LRA and unknown armed groups, which are the leading cause for the displacement of over 120.000 people. Ensuring security in the territory is challenging and the Congolese Governmental Army, FARDC already limited capacity and presence is further hampered by M23 rebellion in nearby regions which besides FARDC effort took control of the town of Goma in 2012.

MONUSCO come to reinforce FARDC in its strive to maintain control of the territory and deployed in 2008 a huge mission and installed a base in Dungu; MONUSCO capacity to monitor and protect on the outreach is remained however rather limited.

Violent armed attacks occurred from LRA have been decreasing since 2011, according to the statistics of humanitarian protection monitoring agencies, tough the impact had on population movements is still dramatic as many people are still shocked by the traumatic direct or indirect experiences lived in past years. Movements of return to the home villages are therefore still very limited and the additional pressure on the local limited resources due to IDPs influx and settlements increased the vulnerability of the whole population living southern of Dungu and threats relations and integration.

This OFDA funded action has a multi-sectorial approach and aims to improve the economic conditions of vulnerable populations (displaced, returned and host having vulnerability criteria) in the Dungu health zone affected by the conflicts by means of developing agricultural and fishing production, agricultural processing activities and access to markets for improved access to revenue and basic goods. Project strategy merged relief with capacity building to address immediate needs as well as causes of food insecurity.

The project goal is *“To improve the economic conditions of vulnerable populations in the Dungu health zone affected by the conflict (displaced, returned, and resident households with specific vulnerabilities) by means of agricultural and fishing production development, agricultural processing activities and access to markets for improved access to revenue, basic goods and a balanced diet”*.

Food Security component relies on standard approach of seeds and tools distribution, with the introduction of sustainable agricultural techniques and rather innovative practices for the context such as home gardening. Fishery upgrading, development of capacity and improvement of production is as well addressed through support provided to local associations. Economic recovery pursues the rehabilitation of infrastructures, 6 markets, 25 Km of roads and bridges in order to enhance accessibility to markets by means of Cash for Work (CFW) to improve short-term purchasing power. Further, the project sets and develops economic associations for marketing and income generation activities, IGA. Targeted beneficiaries for the project are 25.200 individuals (3150 households (HH) assuming family size in 8 persons/HH), composed of IDPs, host families and few returnees. The project targets the most vulnerable part of the population, (1.900 HH assisted with Cash for Work and agricultural inputs) as well as local actors

of economic recovery (1.250 HH beneficiaries grouped in associations and working in fishery, seeds multiplication and marketing activities). A broader number will be considered at final report stage including users of infrastructures rehabilitated (6 markets, 4 bridges and 25km of road).

2. Evaluation methodology and objectives

Overall Objective

The principal objective of the external evaluation is to study the impact, effectiveness and efficacy of the program and the engagement of key stakeholders particularly at the local level.

Specifics Objectives

- ✓ Provide a report detailing evaluation findings on impact, effectiveness and efficacy of the program and the engagement of key local stakeholders.
- ✓ Provide a SWOT analysis of the overall program with concrete recommendations on how to capitalize on the opportunities resulting from the program (e.g. replication or scale up, technical innovations). Identify and examine the relative degree to which internal weaknesses and external challenges affected program implementation and adaptation.
- ✓ Assess the quality and level of community participation.

Evaluation methodology reflects the TOR and the evaluation plan (annexed). Research questions as devised in the evaluation matrix were the backbone of the whole exercise. Evaluation methodology is based on the ACF Utilization – Focused Framework, using the OECD-DAC criteria¹ as revised for their utilization on emergency contexts² and following ACF guidelines³ recommendation on monitoring and cross-cutting issues. The assessment has carried out :

- Joint field visits with the project’s sectors’ coordinators (Food Security and Economic Recovery) , covering a significant sample of program sites
- Direct observation of project outputs (infrastructures)
- Interviews and FGD with primary and secondary stakeholders.
- Livelihood questionnaire was devised and used for semi-structured interviews.

Logistic constraints prevented from a wider field assessment, nevertheless the sample can be considered valid (see Annex 3 - Evaluation Plan Implemented). Desk review of systems and process adopted in the country has been done in Bukavu and arising issues were directly discussed with the key support staff (regional log and admin). Preliminary findings have been first discussed in Dungu during a field participatory debriefing attended by the whole team (program and support) and followed up by a learning workshop held in Bukavu and attended by the coordination team, the CD and the Desk Officer. The inputs given

¹ The five main criteria have been defined by OECD/DAC in 1998 as a result of their 1991 work “Principles of Evaluation of Development Assistance”

² Training on the evaluation of Humanitarian Action. Channel Research / ALNAP

³ ACF-International Evaluation Policy and Guideline, 2011

during the debriefing meetings are only considered into the final report. As the Desk Officer was in the country, HQ briefing and debriefing had been organized in Bukavu.

2.1 Limits of the evaluation

The mission faced the following constraints, reflected on the evaluation report:

- a) Changes in UNHAS flight schedule holdup the implementation of the tentative work plan as the evaluator’s arrival in the field of activities (Dungu) have been delayed one week
- b) Flight restrictions reduced the time left to visit field activities to 7 days
- c) Vehicles availability and functionality in Field Bases affected the coverage
- d) Road accessibility and challenges of field movements during the rainy season (the Hibu bridge, rehabilitated, couldn’t be visited)
- e) Two keys evaluation users (the FSL Country Coordinator and the Regional FSL Coordinator) were not available during the exercise. The Regional FSL Coordinator attended yet the learning workshop in Bukavu.

3. Main findings

3.1 Efficiency

3.1.1 Cost efficiency

The program cost-effectiveness relies mainly on the regular utilization of competitive bid in purchasing implemented and capacity to comply with ACF procedures.

Two additional factors related to procurements affected the cost efficiency:

- a) Following ACF logistic procedures, main purchasing had been gathered and implemented at the beginning of the project, before carrying out a deep assessment to grab the updated and real field needs. As result, overestimation in quantity of materiel needed for infrastructures rehabilitation (wood and iron sheets) affected directly cost efficiency . The exceeding material has been handed over to the local communities and any eventual loss will be accounted at final report stage.
- b) The delays on goods distribution to field, principally logistic means and tools for road rehabilitation increased costs respectively for vehicle maintenance and the CFW. Road rehabilitation activities implemented during rainy season have faced environmental challenges that rose the time necessary for accomplishment and affected the quality of rehabilitation performed.

As further referred in following sections, the limits of need analysis carried out at proposal stage hampered the project implementation. Several costs have been over estimated (activities as seeds multiplication seeds, fishing kits) or under estimated (logistic running costs, costs of CFW) if compared to the expenditures executed. Involvement of concerned departments (finance and log), as well as consistent merging of field inputs from technical departments in defining support and activities costs at proposal stage, is foreseen by ACF but it was not consistent and effective for this project. Logistic resources are very narrow compared to the project needs: only one vehicle and two motorbikes were foreseen at proposal stage and finally not purchased. ACF was supporting the project with existing cars, largely needing maintenance. Spare parts and mechanic skills are provided from Bukavu and, according to field interviews with the Head of Base and the logistic staff, couldn’t match timely the field needs. A new vehicle was still provided by ACF to Dungu base but only in late May.

In order to avoid budget overspending ACF is making an effort to involve all departments (Log, Admin, HR and Program) in budget devising and expenses forecasting, which is the better strategy to improve efficiency.

3.1.2 Process

Log/admin procedures are properly set and well known inside the organization. Specific trainings of national staff are organised by ACF experts (i.e. experts coming from HQ) or by joining wider humanitarian sessions. The regional logistic coordination in Nairobi is involved in providing regular capacity building to national and international staff.

Use of logistic procedures was yet not effective in timely providing several key items to the field (e.g. the car, the gardening seeds). Tools procurement took 3 months from the purchasing order to the distribution to field, thus delaying the starting of road rehabilitation finally implemented during the rainy season. Procedures are then accountable for donor and agency on one side but scaled down accountability towards beneficiaries on the other, since delays rise costs of activities and decreased cost effectiveness.

The monitoring of procurements' progress is effective and shared among the support departments and the programs on a bi-weekly base (*suivi des achats*) so keeping the field informed.

3.1.3 The decision making process

ACF DRC organization chart is still in an evolving process at the evaluation time, as a new chart devised at country level since 2012 was progressively introduced. This change in the organization chart wasn't introduced in Dungu as the OFDA project would have been the last one to be implemented by ACF in Dungu district.

The following challenges arise in the decision making process as devised for the OFDA project:

- While the FSL PM is responsible for forecasting, monitoring and utilizing his program budget, there was some confusion around roles and responsibilities of budget management. The PM did not feel fully autonomous to control his budget..
- The Regional FSL coordinator is the direct supervisor of the PM, in the absence of a Field Coordinator (as was the case in Dungu), in addition to his responsibility to advise program's on technical aspects.....
- The Regional FSL Coordinator is directly supervised by the Head of Mission for the East, but this person only rarely had direct contact with the FSL PM covering the OFDA program. . . .
- The Regional FSL Coordinator is technically advised by the Country FSL Coordinator, but this person insisted on providing direct requests to the FSL PM in Dungu, which created parallel decision lines, blurred oversight of the program, and led to delays in project report delivery and lack of strategic planning.

Communications between Dungu and the coordination office in Bukavu are quite fair as telephone network exists though is not fully reliable, and field bases have an efficient VSAT system. Movements between the coordination office and the field are on the other hand expensive and restricted due to the uncertain schedule of the humanitarian flights.

3.1.4 Staff capacities

The overall policy of the organization aims to reinforce local capacities employing national human resources whenever technical skills requirements are adequate and fulfil the position. Congolese staff are recruited for middle and senior management positions such as PM and Technical Coordinator as much as possible;

Staff skills are overall adequate and reinforced for the national staff. Capacity building is consistent within the organization's policies and trainings are provided to staff according to their sector of employment, mainly relying on internal expertise coming from HQ or either regional coordination in Nairobi.

Professional capacities and experience requested to cover the position of FSL Regional Coordinator should be probably reassessed according to the relevant responsibility in program's quality; international staff covered the position until the beginning of 2012.

Keeping on board of national staff belongs to the overall objectives of the HR management. The average duration of contracts is of over 3 years as the policy and the effective management aims to offer new job opportunities despite the difficulties faced depending on projects funding. At the evaluation moment the finance and the HR offices are managing to relocate the Dungu staff to other operations in the country, thus guaranteeing i) keeping on board skilled staff ii) transfer of competences on new operation fields iii) accountability toward the personnel and the country in guaranteeing long term job perspectives iv) avoiding claims in front of the labour office

Recruitment capacity of the agency was on the other hand a challenge for this project, although at country level looks adequate with only one relevant position vacant. The delay in recruitment of the PM that arrived in the field in December, as well as national technical team (recruited in October) affected the quality of the operation.

3.1.5 Budget monitoring

Budget monitoring is not effective according to the evaluation findings. A proper budget forecast tool is set but not valuable in giving timely information to the PM to allow strategic change in planning if needed.

As said, a budget holder, intended as a focal point leading the budget allocation, is not identified; each department takes decisions about lines of his competence under an overall supervision of the financial regional coordinator, which has a limited overview in the implementation of program activity. Monitoring of expenses is performed on monthly bases as recently a BFU file had been set up, which nevertheless addresses more the update than the forecasted financial information. Budget monitoring could be improved developing a monitoring tool merging work plan, budget monitoring/forecasting and foreseen procurements. This tool should be compiled at the project beginning.

The delay in sharing of information with the field for the OFDA project was mainly related to the merging of ACF West and East DRC missions, as the process also concerned accounting systems. This revision aims also to reinforce the financial monitoring on budgets expenses and the timely information of field managers.

Though the difficulties mentioned above in budget lines spending, the global project envelope had been respected thanks to financial exercises, mainly reallocating coordination and logistic costs on other ACF operations, thus increasing the economic risk for the agency. As OFDA procedures are quite flexible no amendment to the Grant had to be agreed with the donor; nevertheless it is recommended the final financial report and budget narrative are combined explaining the relevant changes in budget lines utilisation.

3.1.6 Security management

Security protocols are defined by the organization General Security Procedures and Local standard Operating Procedures (LSOP), the last adopted according to the field context analysis carried out by the coordination security officer and the Head of the field Base. Procedures are well known and distributed among programs and support staff employing ad hoc meetings held at their arrival in Bukavu coordination office. The security coordination focal point assures the capacity building of key persons in the field on security tasks.

In terms of sharing of information, security reports are distributed on monthly bases, rather narrow for the context. However in case of accident the sharing of information is timely and efficient between the field staff and the Crisis Security Committee (Head of Eastern Mission, Log Coordinator and Log Assistant). Feedback to the field is also timely and consistent.

ACF is an active member of INSO (International NGO Safety Organization) security coordination board, attending meetings on weekly bases and distributing meetings reports to concerned staff.

Consistent implementation of security procedures is nevertheless restricted in the field because of the logistic challenges: vehicles condition in several cases, during the evaluation mission, prevented the staff to respect security protocols especially referred to delays in returning to bases before curfew.

Communication means are also limited and the use of HF radios is only sporadic in the field. Communications in remote areas are mainly assured by the use of satellite telephones, limited by their cost and number (hence not accessible for all the field staff) and not useful in security threats where is not possible to stand still in open space.

3.2 Relevance and Appropriateness

3.2.1 Needs assessment

Assessment tools are overall adequate to the context and to the sectors of intervention, relying on the following pillars:

- ACF knowledge of the field of operations achieved by the agency during the implementation of former operations in FSL (OFDA 1 and 2, Pooled Fund)
- Agency's technical expertise in FSL and its active participation to the sub-cluster as co-facilitator
- Systematic collection of information from the field (livelihood assessment) and from the humanitarian coordination (OCHA and WFP) and data base management
- Partnership with local governmental stakeholders and line Ministries (ITAPEL and *Administration du Territoire*)

Food Security and Livelihoods (as with Nutrition and WASH) belongs to the sectors of major and longer term expertise of ACF-International, further developed in DRC in over fifteen years of relevant operations in these sectors. Actually, ACF-International has an uninterrupted presence in Eastern Congo since 1996.

The project's sectors of intervention and activities are complementary in project design addressing relevant needs in linking improvement of local production, facilitate access to markets and economic recovery. Project priorities identified at proposal stage have been overall confirmed during the evaluation exercise:

- Enhancement in quality and quantity of agricultural productions including introduction of upgraded seeds and training of farmers to new agricultural techniques

- Development of local capacity in fisheries, traditionally a key resource in Haut Uélé for income generation and food security not enough supported by the humanitarian aid and identified as a priority by the FS sub-cluster
- Enhancing access to market from the remote areas of agricultural production, thus improving commercialization as well as security, scaling up integration of population living in remote areas
- Use of Cash for Work whenever feasible for infrastructures rehabilitations, injecting cash in the local community and improving ownership, developing complementary economic activities, and supporting the establishment of women associations

The localities identified for the project intervention (Dungu-Ndedu-Libombi and Ndedu-Afu) south of Dungu are relatively stable, thus consented to orient the project strategy toward the development of local productions and economic activities. Host populations still receive the pressure of a flux of relevant number of IDPS, coming from the more insecure northern areas, such as Ngilima and Duru, where most of the beneficiaries interviewed are coming from.

The project assessment relies on the findings of a rapid livelihood assessment carried out in April 2012 by ACF FSL staff. Direct field information gatherings have been completed with OCHA data about IDPs/returnees population in Dungu territory. The identification of areas of intervention has been defined as the exchanges with OCHA and the other actors of Dungu humanitarian coordination, confirming needs and lack of presence of actors for food security. Information about food security and nutritional situation are related to WFP assessment (October 2011) and PRONANUT (monthly bulletin reports)

Though assessment methodology was correct, relevant factors were not included, thus affecting findings and conclusions since the proposal stage:

- The physical assessment of the infrastructures to be rehabilitated wasn't performed and their identification was not reliable as fund during the thorough assessment, carried out at beginning of the project. Scheduled activities were amended and a new plan was agreed with the donor by an exchange of letters. The revised design identified relevant rehabilitation addressing the needs of local communities.
- A consistent involvement at proposal stage of the field staff in the identification of the program constraints and a comprehensive logistic assessment was not performed, thus not evaluating opportunely problems and possible solutions.
- The challenging of accessibility to the field of operations (including the logistic costs) wasn't carefully evaluated and a comprehensive logistic assessment was not performed at proposal stage, with an overall underestimation of logistic means needed
- Need in HR were not correctly evaluated at proposal stage (number of men/day for rehabilitations of infrastructures and staff required for supervision in CFW)

3.2.2 Beneficiaries' participation and targeting strategies

Beneficiaries were involved only in the implementation phases, as a participatory assessment at proposal stage wasn't conceived. Beneficiaries are overall satisfied of the operation; nevertheless their involvement in the project design would have strengthened the effectiveness of project strategy improving understanding of communities' needs and their habits (see in *effectiveness* specific sections for seeds multiplication and AGR). Besides, it could have prevented from the inaccuracy in the evaluation of the needs in infrastructures rehabilitation and in needs in terms of logistic resources.

Participatory identification of vulnerability criteria was not implemented, thus making more difficult their understanding for communities as revealed during the interviews with the IDPs. In this community, as vulnerability is high for the whole population, the selection of single HH was challenging and raised internal tensions, though the wide information carried out by the project for beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries during the process of identification. Use of broad criteria devised at proposal stage had been appropriately adapted to the context during the implementation, and fulfilling of a higher number of criteria was requested to be selected. Yet communities participated in the deep assessment process. Focus groups and discussions with community leaders and local authorities contributed to identify the new infrastructures for rehabilitation. The identification of direct beneficiaries during project implementation had also been carried out on community bases although it meant an intensive field work lasting almost one month relying on community based identification of potential beneficiaries’ lists and random verification of lists accountability (see also section 3.5). Community mobilization was also the approach used for identification of beneficiaries’ for CFW, with a positive feedback about how selection was carried out.

Accountability and transparency toward beneficiaries was also reinforced by the publication of beneficiaries’ lists, while complaint feedback mechanisms were not foreseen thus missing a direct communication with the most vulnerable.

3.2.3 Logical framework and intervention model

Planned activities are adequate to achieve specific objectives, linking to the overall goal. Looking at the LF, project results are not clearly expressed but match to column of activities. Activities coincide in some cases with the Objectively Verifiable Indicators (number of people benefiting... number of people trained...). Output indicators are adopted for each sub sector, though narrow compared to USAID guidelines⁴ especially for the infrastructures rehabilitation. On the contrary, specific indicators for trainings (i.e. number of people trained, percentage of beneficiaries using their skills training within their livelihood activity) are not included in the LF. The indicator used for CFW measures the number of infrastructures rehabilitated and information about the number of beneficiaries are given on the “activity” column. Cash-for-work salaries as well as the amount of money that is infused into the local economy are not monitored by the indicators . . .

The LF does not express clearly the result/activity intended for the rehabilitation of infrastructures, which is yet detailed in the project proposal. Though, the indicator is only related to the number of rehabilitations achieved without monitoring their management, the hand over to communities and the impact on local economy.

Only one impact indicator is foreseen at proposal stage (agricultural inputs *increase of number of months of HH self sufficiency*) which doesn’t seem to be measurable (SMART) at the project end, as self-sufficiency is related to a number of different factors.

⁴ USAID Guidelines for unsolicited proposals and reporting, 2006

Sector and objective	Sub sector	Activities	Indicators (by sub sector)	Targets
Agriculture and food security Vulnerable households have increased their food production.	Seed system and agricultural inputs	1) 1000 vulnerable households (displaced, resident, returned) each receive a farming/gardening kit: tools (1 hoe, 1 machete, 1 ax and 1 watering can), food crop seed (10 kg rice and 5 kg cowpeas), and kitchen garden seed (40g)	Increase in number of months of food self-sufficiency due to distributed seed systems/ agricultural input for beneficiary families	6 months of food self-sufficiency due to distributed seed systems/ agricultural input for beneficiary families
		2) 750 agricultural households grouped into 30 associations of 25 members each (primarily returned, resident and host) receive a seed multiplication kit (tools: 15 hoes, 5 machetes and 5 axes; seed: 2500 ML of cassava cuttings, 50 kg rice and 70 kg peanut)	Number of people benefiting from seed systems /agricultural input activities	1,750 Households (14,000 individuals) benefiting from seed systems /agricultural input activities
		3) Agricultural households trained on improved agricultural and seed multiplication methods and organizational management		
	Fisheries	1) 400 fisher households grouped into 20 associations of 20 members each (displaced, resident, returned) each receive a fisheries kit (20 nets, 35 spools nylon line and 30 packets of hooks)	Number of people trained in fisheries	400 people trained in fisheries
			Number of people benefiting from fisheries activities	400 Households (3,200 individuals) benefiting from fisheries activities
		2) Fisher households trained on sustainable fishery management, maintenance of fishing gear and processing/conservation of fish catch	Kilograms of fish catch/ fisher/ month	50 Kilograms of fish catch/fisher/month
Economic Recovery and Market Systems Critical market infrastructure and activity is restored.	Market Infrastructure Rehabilitation	1) 900 adults (displaced, resident and returned) generate revenue through cash for work, of which 180 adults for the rehabilitation of 6 markets, 480 adults for the rehabilitation of 25 km of roads and 240 adults for the rehabilitation of 3 bridges	Amount of market infrastructure rehabilitated	6 market infrastructure, 25 km road and 3 bridges rehabilitated
	Economic Asset Development	1) 100 households grouped into 10 associations for marketing activities	Number of people assisted through economic asset development activities	100 Households (800 Individuals) assisted through economic asset development activities
			Number and percent of people utilizing economic assets created to support their livelihood pattern	75% of beneficiaries (75 households) utilizing economic assets created to support their livelihood pattern

The remaining indicators are overall measurable and were monitored during the project with adequate tools such as progress reports, as well as at the project end with several monitoring tools (see also section 3.8).

Sources of Verification SOV were not identified at proposal stage (as not requested by the donor) but then devised during the project implementation. Therefore for the impact indicator mentioned above, the identification of an adequate SOV to measure it is still a challenge for the project staff as found during the evaluation.

Project intervention model is overall effective in merging food security and economic recovery activities to achieve the goal of improving economic conditions of vulnerable population in the health zone of Dungu. Nevertheless, aspects of the methodology represented challenges during the implementation (see also section 3.4):

- A work plan wasn't devised at proposal stage, scaling down the overall forecasting capacity and contributing to the challenges faced during the implementation
- Project duration and timing of implementation didn't match the agricultural calendar and rainy season (e.g. sowing for seeds multiplication was foreseen for agricultural season *B 2012*, which corresponded with the project beginning and couldn't be exploited)

3.2.4 Coping strategies

Beneficiaries coping strategies had been only partially enhanced, for both agricultural and economic recovery. Existing mechanisms of mutual help between HHs were not taken into account and strengthened for agriculture inputs, where farmers (especially IDPs) use to carry on many works on community bases (e.g. harvest or field preparation); hence groups farming could have been more appropriate than individual support. In IGAs, the community based credit system (tontine), already current in some of the women

associations, wasn't merged in the activities promoted. Anglers, who used to shift toward agriculture during the dry season, were also not identified nor encouraged by the project.

The project methodology overall addresses humanitarian principle and standards; nonetheless, project national and international staff's knowledge and use of humanitarian standards and guidelines is not consistent.

3.3 Coherence

At proposal stage activities were well related with project objectives, though this link grew weaker within some aspects of the project approach:

- Seed multiplication was more related to ACF redistribution foreseen for 2013 than to an improvement of farming productions for the associations. The action was then reoriented during the implementation in collaboration with farmers associations (see also section 3.4.2).
- Coherence of foreseen IGA in addressing economic restoration is not evident. The approach is not detailed enough in terms of beneficiaries' selection at the proposal stage, trainings of associations in accountable management, technical training and orientation. The cash transfer is not appropriate to this context considering relevant amounts involved (see also section 3.4.6).
- CFW is a strategy to enlarge the benefits on the community of the works planned by the project. Infrastructures rehabilitation cannot be considered only a direct consequence of CFW but should have been managed as a specific result of the project.

Coherence was very high analyzing the approach used by ACF in purchasing of farming seeds to be distributed to vulnerable HH and to associations for multiplication. A part of seeds distributed have been purchased by local associations supported during projects implemented by ACF in 2010, funded by Pooled Fund and OFDA. The procurement has been done after an accurate evaluation of quantity and quality of seeds available, making germination tests on significant samples. This was a kind of *ex-post* monitoring exercise performed by the project with very encouraging findings detailed in a specific report. ACF also advocated for the local purchase of quality seeds once assessed their availability, thus enhancing viability of former assisted associations (PU purchased a relevant quantity of seeds).

Coherence between the two sectors of intervention is intended at proposal stage as markets and road rehabilitation scale up the commercialization opportunities for farmers and economic associations. However a veritable synergy is not adequately developed in terms of reinforcement of the distribution chains and of involvement of associations in the management of social infrastructures.

3.3.1 Coordination with governmental stakeholders

Coordination with ITAPEL was consistent for the agricultural and food security sector, where the governmental agency was involved in the identification of the agricultural and fishers associations and in the project implementation. ITAPEL collaborates with actors of humanitarian aid since the beginning of the crisis in Haut Uélé in 2008, and was already partner of ACF during its former operations funded by OFDA and Pooled Funds. The partnership was defined by two Memoranda of Understanding:

- First concerned the mutual responsibilities during the project implementation, where ITAPEL staff (6 persons) was directly responsible of technical supervision of HH and associations for a duration of three months against the payment of a monthly allowance
- Second regarded the commitment of the partner after the project end in assuring the supervision of agricultural and fisheries activities, against the handover of some equipment (motorbikes, bicycles, pc).

A copy of each Memorandum had been transmitted to the partner provincial office in Kisangani (IPAPEL). During the period of collaboration technicians were still governmental staff carrying on at the same time their ordinary activities. The participation of ITAPEL to all the project steps enhanced the integration of governmental policy in agriculture trainings and in fishery. Besides, a veritable capacity building was achieved: a) agency coverage of his territory and contacts with farmers, fishermen and in general with communities is scaled up during the partnership as regular movements to field were done, and after the end of the project thanks to the handover of some logistic means b) although ad hoc trainings of ITAPEL technicians was not foreseen, their proximity and daily collaboration to the ACF technical staff had the effect of on the job training c) a part of the support was given by ACF through the rehabilitation of ITAPEL office in Dungu (instead of giving salary allowances). One challenge was yet represented by the amount of the allowance, actually about three times the salary, affecting the viability of the collaboration.

For economic recovery sector a similar effort was done to collaborate with the line Ministry of Public Works, dealing with the local department of Roads Rehabilitation and with the AT (*Administrateur du Territoire*), nonetheless partnership was limited to sharing of information. Besides, capacity of this governmental actor is very low at field level and cannot fit the broad commitment of providing infrastructure maintenance.

3.3.2 Coordination with local community leaders and program acceptance

The lack of communities' involvement at proposal stage, as already stated, prevented from the identification of risks linked to the implementation of economic recovery activities in terms of community acceptance and participation. Hence, though community leaders have been regularly informed of project activities and involved in the selection of beneficiaries, the efforts done to assure their implication didn't lead to the expected results. Achievement of community ownership and empowerment was rather challenging as often leaders considered personal benefits prior to the achievement of long lasting benefits for communities. The weakness of social cohesion finally contributed to the general lack of effectiveness in setting up Community Based Organizations (CBOs) for the continuation of the project.

Difficulties in the collaboration with community leaders and their limited support to the operation affected the communities program understanding and overall acceptance. Quarrels raised between the project staff and the leaders. The ACF staff in charge for economic recovery sector, where the large amount of cash distributed to associations moved up social tensions, have been accused and taken to court yet finally absolved. An internal investigation had been organized by ACF in order to make clear the staff accountability and the social dynamics.

The effectiveness of trainings and sensitizations was improved as carried out by the ITAPEL staff which, belonging to local community, was able to transmit a more easily understandable message. Zande population, most represented among the targeted beneficiaries, is not used to collective/groups activities and normally prefers to work on individual/family bases, making more challenging the establishment of new associations.

3.3.4 Coordination with the International Community

ACF plays an important role at country level as co-facilitator of Nutrition and FS Clusters, and is the co-facilitator for the FS sub-cluster in Dungu. Interview with FAO showed a very good satisfaction with ACF collaboration in supporting FS Cluster's activities in Haut Uélé. On the other hand, the agency isn't present in Bunia, where clusters responsible for Haut Uélé are based, thus losing the opportunity to play a more consistent role in the strategy of global regional approach of humanitarian assistance.

3.4 Effectiveness

Overall results and indicators are achieved by the project. Specific objectives of increasing food productions for vulnerable HH as well as restoring critical market infrastructures are also attained. Output indicators are reached for the two sectors of intervention. Economic asset development and effective income generation on the contrary cannot be considered accomplished according to the evaluation findings.

Quality of goods and services distributed is generally adequate and fit the needs, except for some equipment (fishing nets not suitable for the locality and machetes unsuitable)

Effectiveness of trainings is also different if considering technical or management: the technical trainings are overall effective although they still need to be consolidated with a continuous supervision after the project end. Trainings on Management for associations’ members, otherwise, did not reach an effective understanding of the rules and the roles, as found during the interviews with beneficiaries (farmers and fisheries associations, women associations for marketing).

Timeliness of intervention is a weakness affecting the effectiveness of the whole action, as already stated, due to inaccuracy in devising work plan and overall delay in the project start up. Main constraints affecting the timeliness as identified with the field team meetings are:

- Project duration doesn’t fit the framework of rainy and agricultural season
- Delay in key staff recruitment
- Delay in purchasing and distribution to field of key assets (vehicle, garden seeds, road rehabilitation tools)
- External unpredictable occurrences: Goma clashes in November 2012 and evacuation of international staff, and floods in October impeding regular field movements.

Here below are some considerations divided for result :

3.4.1 Agricultural inputs to vulnerable HH

The activity was effective in increasing food production for vulnerable HH, targeting both IDPs and host families. The effectiveness of distribution of assets for crops and gardening production was measured by one output indicators (Number of PP) and an impact indicator (Increase in Number of months of self-sufficiency). The first is achieved while the other is not yet assessable at the project end as stated in section 3.2.3. The project didn’t play a relevant role in addressing the mediation of land allocation, whilst availability of cultivable land was one of the selection criteria and is one of the causes of vulnerability. The displaced family interviewed declared to had satisfactory agreements for fields exploitation, coming from direct negotiation between IDPs and local community.-

Gardening activities should have been implemented during the dry season covering the period of gap in farming production to assure a wider impact on food security. The dry season normally ends on the second week of March, when rainy season and farming activities start. As the gardening seeds had been distributed at the end of February, the activity has been carried on at the same time of crops cultivation. The beneficiaries grew crops and vegetables in the same field, while gardening was supposed to be produced closer to the villages. Gardening productions were however less successful as hit by rain causing a reduction of the germination rate, and more exposed to stealing. Activities carried on during the rainy season prevented from irrigation, still identified as a major challenge by all the beneficiaries interviewed. During the thorough assessment water availability has been considered as a relevant selection criteria but

finally not considered due to timing of implementation; besides, most of the families couldn't fit this criterion.

Although the delay in implementation, gardening activity was overall effective and extremely relevant in spreading the know how about potentiality of this type of production as well as in introducing high quality vegetables in the locality, as remarked during field visits to the local markets.

Sowing for food crops production (rice and cowpeas) was carried out starting on April for cowpeas (season A 2013) while in most of the cases rice wasn't yet planted during the evaluation assessment. Project monitoring was consequently very narrow for productions and the assessment on the impact on the beneficiaries self-sufficiency was not implementable.

Quantities distributed fit the farmers size of cultivation; quality and quantity are appreciated by the beneficiaries and the targeted number of families fits the project output indicator.

Strategy of selection of distinct vulnerable HH (instead of forming associations) was very challenging for several reasons linked to beneficiaries identification (see also *relevance*) as well as difficulties of giving assistance to 1.000 households spread in remote areas of project implementation. According to logistic means available and considering the location of crops fields, about 10 to 20km from villages, it wasn't possible for the project technical staff and for ITAPEL to guarantee a consistent supervision of the total number of beneficiaries.

3.4.2 Seeds multiplication

As seen in the analysis of the intervention model, the lack of an established work plan at proposal stage hindered the seeds multiplication model, finally not adapted to the agricultural seasonality. Sowing for seeds production was planned at proposal stage for August 2012 (season B) at the very beginning of the project. The planting activity was therefore implemented in season A 2013 and the distribution of seeds production foreseen for the B2013 couldn't be achieved.

The lack of community participation to the needs evaluation carried out at proposal stage meant that there was no assessment of the profitability of seed production, which the team realized only (and too belatedly) during implementation, was quite low. The cassava cuttings are normally marketed inside the communities, while peanuts and rice seeds can be sold for sowing only in limited quantities; this is related to difficulties of storage for several months, until the next sowing season, as well as farmers needs to get an income in the meantime.

Based on these findings the associations' members in collaboration with the ACF technical staff reoriented the strategy to farming on community base making use of upgraded seeds. The project focused on training in innovative agricultural techniques and capacity building of associations, sustaining the common utilization of crops. According to local agricultural practices, a third of the harvest was consumed by the association's members, a third was sold for consumption; a third was stocked for next sowing season and used by the association's members, with a limited rate exceeding the needs actually sold to other farmers.

The ownership of the associations on this activity was then very relevant as project was flexible in reorienting strategy according to their recommendations; as well, the expected result can be considered fully attained in terms of an increase in food production.

Associations' capacity building is effective and innovative. agricultural techniques are well understood with a high ownership of local farmers, beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Collaboration with ITAPEL is solid and useful as far as logistic means allow the governmental actor coverage. The value of quality seeds is also appreciated by the whole community, therefore their spreading during the next agricultural seasons seems to be assured.

3.4.3 Support to fishermen associations

Support to fishermen associations is one effective activity of the project in improving food security by increasing the quantity of fish/day. ITAPEL is actually involved in the supervision of associations and it represents a warranty for the respect of fishery rules. Associations' capacity building in management is also more effective when compared to other activities; moreover, their collaboration with ITAPEL grows more when working in group (see also impact). Association's members are become aware of the benefits of working as group in terms of increased fish collection capacity, mutual support in case of disease and better management of security since security committees are set inside the associations. The main security threats are kidnapping from unknown armed groups and hippos attacks on pirogues. Distribution of benefits is clear understood for all the members: half of the catch for the fisherman and half for the association. For one association the cash of working capital was used for the purchasing of pirogues, which usually were rented (see also 3.6)

The fishery study foreseen at proposal stage was finally not implemented due to difficulties faced in the selection of an experienced consultant. However, after discussion with ITAPEL and ACF technicians, the study was not capital as most of knowledge about fishery were available ITAPEL.

Quality of equipment distributed was overall good though the challenge of the type of fishing nets distributed, not enough strong for the local techniques of fishing and therefore not used by beneficiaries. Satisfactory nets instead, have been hand made by the fishermen using the spools of nylon line also distributed by the project.

3.4.4 Infrastructures rehabilitation

As announced in the need assessment section, the analysis made at project proposal stage was reviewed as some of the infrastructures identified were not existing or not accessible (3 out of 4 bridges and 1 out of 6 markets). Findings of thorough assessment were then defined involving local communities and authorities, and an explanatory note sent to the donor.

Following the communities' request, the project accepted to carry out a broader bridge rehabilitation compared to the original plan; this was a challenging choice as the agency expertise is more pertinent to manage small sized rehabilitations. The achievement of these rehabilitations during the existing limited timing required a relevant effort and absorption of resources, though finally achieved.

The rehabilitation of the road for the 25km foreseen at proposal stage was as well attained. Still, this activity has been strongly affected by the overall delay in the project in startup and distribution of tools, and finally had to be carried on during the rainy season. This made more difficult the achievement and affected the quality of rehabilitation, leading also to a relevant increase of costs. Delay in setting CBO for road maintenance, not yet identified at the project end, will affect its conditions and safeguarding after the project end. . To be more effective, committees should have been associated from the beginning to the rehabilitation and maintenance of road in order to reinforce their capacity and sense of ownership.

Market rehabilitation was achieved according to project proposal; the use of CFW maximizes the economic benefits for local community. Nevertheless relevant issues as trainings in market management and involvement of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries economic associations in management are not well developed. The management Market Committee as identified at proposal stage is in most of the cases composed only by the community leader/s and is not representative of local producers and small business; retailers are thus users of markets infrastructure and they are not actors in their management. Hygiene and sanitation is as well not pursued: availability of sanitation facilities as latrines, solid waste disposal facilities, drainages is not foreseen/implemented and no campaigns for hygiene promotion have been carried out.

The delay in setting the COGES (*Comités de Gestion*) prevented capacity building in management of infrastructures and repartition of benefits into the community. Community leaders run rehabilitated markets following existing mechanisms of direct management of cost benefits. Producers associations are not concerned in markets organization and are relegated to the role of users paying the fees decided by the community leaders (and increased after the rehabilitation) narrowing their empowerment and the viability of infrastructures.

3.4.5 Cash for Work

The activity was effective in providing an income of approximately of one month work to a relevant number of HH living in Dungu and in the villages along the road targeted for rehabilitation. Challenges were the cost, strongly increased compared to the estimation at the proposal stage, and the ACF capacity of supervision as the staff was underestimated compared to needs (1 person supervising up to 150 workers for road rehabilitation). Number attained of final beneficiaries and amount received/man is still under calculation at the time of the evaluation and will be detailed at final report stage, the total sum infused into local economy.

The indicator for this activity is the number of rehabilitation achieved, not adequate (see also section 3.2.3). Hence, in several cases, due to the limited timing available for the implementation, the project gave priority to the employment of capable workers that offered more guarantee to achieve results instead of targeting the most vulnerable.

3.4.6 Income Generating Activities

Economic associations for marketing activities visited and FGD with 4 out of the 10, resulted ineffective in reinforcing the local economic asset development. Although promotion of women association is pursued, many challenges affected the success of this part of the project.

- Design of the IGA at proposal stage, the amount for cash distribution foreseen was not proportional and appropriate to the context (1.200 USD/association represent an enormous amount at village level)
- Setting of associations and training in management wasn't effective in assuring the understanding of different roles and members' rights and duties inside the association. Most of members interviewed are not aware of amount received by the association and the income related to investments; cash and benefits are managed by a very limited number of members, usually just the president and the secretary
- Proper tools for accountable management of funds are not set up. Management training was not effective and use of register not understood
- Associations' coping strategies such as community based micro credit where not identified nor reinforced by the action
- Orientation of associations towards cost-effective and viable activities was limited as a consistent market analysis (gaps and offer) wasn't carried out
- IGA are not related to fill gaps in of local services, thus their acceptance was limited
- Existing associations with a number of members higher than 10 (number foreseen at proposal stage) had to reduce their number, at least formally, to be selected, hence the strategy adopted wasn't flexible in adapting the action to the context
- The 'do-no-harm' principle was not respected as both project staff and beneficiaries had been exposed to risks: project staff taken to the court and beneficiaries exposed to pressure from communities leaders

The implementation of this activity raised relevant tensions among project and communities, finally leading to a dispute involving ACF staff which had been forbidden to get in contact with beneficiaries for over two months. This limited the supervision capacity further affecting the quality of implementation.

3.5 Coverage

Project addresses the needs of 25,200 persons as calculated at proposal stage, although an additional number of beneficiaries had to be calculated as users of social infrastructures rehabilitated. Indirect beneficiaries' of the operation are the whole population of the villages making use of the road and bridges rehabilitated.

Some of the project's activities are not intended to target the most vulnerable (seeds production, fisheries, IGA) but existing associations, which can be actors of the economical recovery, thus responding to basic performance criteria. However, a part of activities (CxW, agricultural facilities) addresses the most vulnerable part of the population including IDPs, so respecting humanitarian priorities. IDPs and host communities have similar access to assistance as host families and IDPs are both targeted, thus improving acceptance and integration of displaced populations. Moreover, the project targeted fishermen which represent a population in need never assisted by the international aid and ready to contribute to a sustainable economic development.

Geographical coverage is relevant as the project outreaches remote areas in need not assisted by other humanitarian actors although important as hosting a high number of IDPs.

The beneficiaries' selection criteria are well defined for the different sectors of the intervention. Nevertheless the number of criteria adopted for the selection of vulnerable households is too general and 3 (low income for large families/ access to land but few production tools/absence of seeds stock) out of the 5 criteria widen the eligibility to a large part of the population. As the criteria had been set without the population involvement, their understanding especially inside the IDPs community was challenging though the efforts made by the project staff. Finally a combination of multiple criteria have been adopted as new strategy for selection, better understood by beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries; complains from the IDP leaders have nevertheless carried on, also related to their frustration as project didn't accept to give them personal benefits.

Communities had been involved in targeting of beneficiaries for CxW and rotation in the lists had been decided to increase the coverage of the action.

Project design and objectives as well as budget information including the total envelope affected by OFDA have been accurately shared with local communities, traditional and governmental authorities and international community, confirming ACF transparency and accountability

3.6 Impact

Project objectives and indicators are overall achieved as detailed in the effectiveness section. Increase of HH food production is overall conformed during the interviews, as consistent changes in functioning occurred for availability of tools and quality seeds and introduction of improved techniques in agriculture and fisheries.

The agricultural inputs did improve several aspects of farming inside the targeted communities. Innovative techniques of cultivation are well understood by project beneficiaries and extended to non-beneficiaries; farmers share their experience in the villages thus enhancing ownership at community level, where

practical exchanges of technical achievements among beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries are carried on out of project support. A viable community ownership needs anyhow to be strengthened carrying on the supervision after the project end, which is the role to be played by ITAPEL. Innovative farming techniques to promote land conservation, a topic of trainings, seems to be very far from having an impact on farmers' understanding, still immovable in their tradition of erratic exploitation of land.

The quality of crops and garden productions is improved for the project beneficiaries. It was interesting to find in the local markets the peanuts and the gardens productions made by project beneficiaries: "*ACF aubergines*", "*ACF arachides*" as the people call the varieties introduced by the project. Although gardening is very marginal for local farmers, much more oriented in extensive field crops, its advantages have been well understood at family level: a quantity is consumed increasing diet variety and a part is sold by women in the local market, thus earning money which will promote child education and family health care. Even if challenges were faced during the implementation, garden's productions are often enough to allow both family consumption and sale to market with an additional impact on the household economy.

On the whole, HH and associations targeted for the project specific objective related to agriculture and FS remark during the interviews an improvement of their livelihood, with increasing of indicators such as capacity in payment of school fees, health care, purchase of clothes and meat.

Fishermen were purchasing pirogues and additional equipment with the income earned selling larger quantities of fish. Impact on the empowerment of associations is also relevant, given the reinforcement of their collaboration with ITAPEL in assuring the control of the respect of the rules in fishery. This partnership is capital as use of toxics is common in the area, with tragic effects on environment and fish reproduction; local associations are the most important source of information for ITAPEL, having a good capacity of intervention yet narrow logistic capacities for monitoring of the large area, reinforced with the collaboration of fishermen.

Overall, impact on empowerment of CBO is limited to the ones already existing before. Members of fishermen associations acknowledge that working in groups is a social and economic advantage as quantity collected are normally higher and they are guaranteed in case of any personal hindrance. Existing agricultural associations selected for seeds multiplication are also enhanced in their internal management and they identify the benefits of working in groups (improved capacity in cultivation, better capitalization of the expertise). On the contrary new associations set by the project, as well as committees organized for maintenance of infrastructures, are not effective at the project end and most of members do not feel to be endowed with a stronger role in the community.

In terms of social impact, it's limited when working with single HH compared to the associations. Mechanisms of mutual assistance in growing land exist between the HH belonging to the same community, especially IDPs, but are not reinforced by the project. Project performed long lasting infrastructures rehabilitations (markets, roads and bridges), which have a clear impact on reducing the isolation of target population, improving the local commerce as well as security. Community mobilisation was nevertheless not adequate to timely enhance the capacity of management and maintenance. A challenge about the road rehabilitation effectiveness, on the medium term, is as well the transit of big trucks having a relevant impact especially during rainy season, and the possibility of its regulation on community bases.

Project impact on security in the area of intervention is also to be noticed as effect of the improved access and project's outreach of enclaves, simplifying public utilization of roads and bridges for trading. Reduction

of erratic agriculture and exploitation of gardens close to villages also improves security of women, less exposed to criminality and violence. Moreover, the impact on conflict resolution achieved targeting both IDPs and host population further reinforce social cohesion and hence security.

Use of impact indicators is not evident for this project being an emergency operation during only 12 months. Only one is devised in the LF (increase of number of months of HH self-sufficiency) but is not properly measurable (see also section 3.2.3)

Ownership of activities and empowerment of communities are the important factors determining impact, strengthening for this project by the reinforcement of links with governmental services as ITAPEL. Nevertheless, the CBO (committees and associations) should be consistently associated to the operation to get results, considering the challenge always represented by community ownership. If the project relies on community-based management of infrastructures, the number of management committees formed and trained should be included in the indicators.

Additional indicators could help in identify the right strategy to improve impact, such as:..

- % of infrastructures effectively maintained by the community
- % of beneficiaries adopting improved agricultural/fishery practices
- Increased income for markets users
- % of committees/associations using correctly the registers for cash management

adequate SOV should be devised since the proposal stage to assure a correct monitoring, especially when using impact indicators . Once more, an effective baseline survey will be capital to be able to measure this kind of indicators.

The project devised specific tools for impact measurement, foreseeing a final survey using impact feedback forms. This is a useful tool but as the delay in implementation the analysis wasn't yet completed at the project end. According to the evaluation findings the technical achievements for farmers and fisheries are viable as productions are improved for all the beneficiaries interviewed with a correct understanding of improved practices. Infrastructure management and maintenance is on the contrary not assured on community bases as the lack of consistency of committees.

No impact in livelihood/income increasing is remarkable for IGA, due to this activity methodology as discussed for the effectiveness. In this case a negative social impact is on the contrary evident as tensions raised between the beneficiaries and the community.

Synergy between economic recovery and food security scales up the project's impact as commercialization prop up productions. Accountability of the organization and communities' perception of its commitment is strongly enhanced by its commitment in bridges/road rehabilitation. Impact of markets rehabilitation could have been significantly improved involving producers associations in its management.

3.7 Connectedness

Although sustainability is not intended by the project, it should be assumed considering the target of the population (vulnerable but also actors of economic development) and the project methodology. As a matter of fact, technical trainings, settings of IGA, introduction of new agricultural and fisheries techniques, setting of associations for seeds production as well as infrastructures rehabilitations are not intended only

for a short term impact, requiring to achieve a minimum level of community ownership and viability to be effective.

Links between relief, rehabilitation and development belongs to the project strategy which address the needs of most vulnerable, assisted by CFW and distributions, as well as rehabilitation reinforcing the capacities of local actors of economic recovery. Issues related to local development are taken into account and addressed through infrastructures rehabilitation. Technical and logistic capacities of governmental stakeholders concerned by FS are also reinforced by a consistent partnership with ACF lasting from former operations implemented. The 2 MoUs signed with ITAPEL are reliable indicators of project connectedness with local stakeholders. ACF decided to collaborate with the governmental agencies staff for technical support to communities, thus establishing a link between the two actors and guaranteeing the governmental acknowledge of the action. ITAPEL technicians were directly supported by ACF during the project being (though remaining ITAPEL staff) by the payment of a significant allowance (about 3 times the salary), thus reducing the viability of their supervision activities. Hence, the PM devised the second MoU at the project end foreseeing an engagement of ITAPEL in guaranteeing protraction of supervision against the donation of office equipment as well as motorbikes to allow field displacements. This strategy will further reinforce the sustainability and the consolidation of agricultural and fishery enhancement.

Supervision of roads and bridges rehabilitation associated the technicians of the local department of roads, as well employed by the government and earning a monthly allowance from ACF during the project being. Accountability and capacity of Public Works Department and local Road Office, opposite of ITAPEL, doesn't seem to be reliable in providing maintenance of infrastructures rehabilitated. Then project strategy relies on setting of CBO for the maintenance of infrastructures, which yet were not identified at the project end. No rules for the road utilization during rainfall exist in this part of the country; hence regular reparation will be capital to prevent from huge damaging during the rainy season; therefore ineffectiveness in forming committees will affect definitively the sustainability of this activity.

Markets rehabilitation methodology is also rather weak in terms of connectedness and sustainability. Community ownership of infrastructures is not relevant though a number of community members participated to CxW. Actually communities awareness of their role in markets management is very low, committees are not set at the project end and the markets will be finally managed by the community leaders. As infrastructures are improved the prices for expositors will be increased as stated by the leaders, while management of income is not defined yet, depending on leaders' decisions.

An exit strategy is not clearly identified by the organization, which was mainly relying on an additional phase finally not funded by OFDA. Consequently ACF was forced to close its base in Dungu.

3.8 Monitoring system

Adequate performance monitoring tools are set and used during the implementation, such as the monthly progress report (narrative and an excel version), which provides detailed information about project progress at different coordination levels in the country as well as at the HQ. A feedback is regularly given to the PM but not habitually forwarded to technical field staff and supervisors.

The progress report is also the main tool of monitoring of indicators and it was effective for this project for the output indicators. Yet the impact indicator (see LF in *relevance*) couldn't be monitored using this instrument.

Outputs are monitored by the project using the post-distribution, post-harvest and post-training forms. Monitoring have been implemented in June, late to get back to project with an enhancing analysis.

Additional tools are foreseen for monitoring of impact: for each sector of activity an inquiry form is devised with key questions for impact measurement. The final survey on project impact was carried on at the end of the project and results were not available for the evaluator. A database is available and detailed with beneficiaries family composition and items received with dates of distribution.

The monitoring tools are well defined and consistently used for ACF, though in this case more oriented in project reporting than in improving program quality. This is effect of the delay in performing the surveys and providing a timely analysis of data collected to be still capitalized during the project implementation. For this project an additional challenge was represented by the overall delay of activities and the PDM, PTM and PHM started in June/July, with the exception of fisheries' PDM carried out in April.

Impact monitoring is challenging in emergency considering the short program duration. Nonetheless proximity to beneficiaries and implementation of simple surveys could give important information for strategy orientation if carried out and analysed *during the action*. Feedback and complaint mechanisms once set and working give an extremely relevant contribution to monitoring effectiveness.

3.9 Cross cutting issues

Project activities address women needs and scale up their resilience capacities. Women are the target for IGA and represent a relevant rate of the population selected for agricultural activities and CFW. Women are also main target for trainings thus improving the project impact on education. On the contrary, women are less represented inside the Dungu ACF team (only 1 supervisor and 2 housewives).

Community understanding of conservation agriculture and farming techniques to promote land conservation is still not fully achieved even though this was a topic of agricultural trainings. Improvement of agricultural techniques and tools availability increases the acreage exploited and consequently the environmental impact. Therefore effective introduction of land conservation is mandatory for FS programs to avoid a negative long impact on natural resources.

Protection is taken into account but not adequately mainstreamed in the project. The access to land for IDPs, the negotiation with communities or the eventual tension raised are all relevant aspects for food security assessment. The project included the availability of cultivable land in the selection criteria, but should have been more active in facilitating the mediations of land allocation as this is one of main causes of vulnerability in FS. Once more proximity to communities plays a key role hence is mandatory to establish effective communication. Further, instead of working with individuals HH projects can focus in supporting associations that hosting among its members either local population and IDP to contribute to minimize conflicts.

Good governance as veritable empowerment of leaders in terms of accountability and capacity to deliver social services, should be mainstreamed into the actions when working in economic recovery. Awareness campaign could be implemented to inform direct and indirect beneficiaries about their social and human rights and their leaders' obligations whilst implementing. Sensitization, trainings and awareness of governmental and nongovernmental leaders should be merged consistently into ER.

Community participation was a challenge more related to the context than to the project strategy). During the implementation the community has been involved as possible and the initial assessment had been reoriented on the base of a participatory analysis (see also section 3.3.2)

4. Conclusions

Overall, ACF manage to implement a challenging and wide program with an effective multi sectorial strategy contributing in enhancing food security and access to market in vulnerable areas in the outreach not covered by other humanitarian actors. Areas of the intervention are still hosting a significant number of IDPs and the project plays an important role on conflict mitigation. Needs of population in the area of intervention are identified and addressed according to project means and coverage, with a synergic effect of food security and economic recovery in increasing quantities and qualities of local productions and prop up commercial exchanges through improved access to market systems thus achieving project objectives and respecting the grant agreement engagements. FS strategy reflects ACF knowledge of the area and it is very effective in scaling up local productive capacities according to needs and potentiality; impact and connectedness are improved through a steady partnership with local governmental actors of rural development. Social infrastructures rehabilitation is meaningful, appreciated by communities and it address the capital issue of access to market, leading to revitalize the economic opportunities threatened by isolation of farmers and associations.

Communities' commitment and involvement in holding the handover of markets and road maintenance is nevertheless still to be reinforced and not yet adequate at the project end, as well as the low capacity of Public Works Office not up to the challenge of bridges maintenance

Challenges of implementation are also related to some inaccuracies in the analysis carried out at proposal stage, leading to tailor a strategy for IGA not adequate to the context. An overall and unnecessary delay in project starts up resulted in challenges to reach activities' targets during project implementation and affected cost-effectiveness. At the end of the project, the economic vulnerability of households in the concerned areas is reduced and food security enhanced, though a consolidation and more long term effect of attained results would need a further action more oriented in rehabilitation and development than relief. The issue of early recovery of the IDPs population assisted, once returned to their home villages, should also be considered as it is a gap in humanitarian assistance and could be eventually addressed by an ACF action, to support people in developing capacities build up during the displacement in a sustainable way.

5. Recommendations and lessons learned

The following outlines key recommendations and lessons learned during the evaluation exercise, outputs of debriefings, learning workshop and continuous discussion with ACF staff. As the operation in Dungu is over, we tried to develop recommendations in general terms trying to let them useful at country level and for other ACF intervention.

5.1 Systems and process

- Analysis of program **cost efficiency** found its bond to competitive bids analysis and best market price identification but also to timing of goods distribution as delays in lead times can strongly

increase the operations costs (e.g. rehabilitation of roads/bridges during the rainy season Timely reorientation of resources addressing the field priorities should be done before implementing procurements, on the bases of a thorough assessment to be performed at the beginning of the project

- Observation and discussion with field and coordination ACF staff found the need of encouraging inputs from the field technical staff as well as a **logistic** costs estimation in order to suitably identify the **means needed for the operation and the challenges**. Logistic procedures need to be accountable towards beneficiaries assuring timeliness of services delivered thus ensuring respect of the 6 rights⁵: right goods, in right condition, in the right quantities, at the right time, in the right place, to the right person). An analysis on efficacy of procurement plan and supply chain management at country level is then recommended. ACF procedures can be effective in terms of timing if consistent forecasting and planning is assured. Security protocols are substantial only if supported by logistic means to put them into practice.
- **Project management** should develop at the onset of the action a planning/monitoring tool that takes into account work plan, budget monitoring/forecasting and procurement plan, thus facilitating communication and coordination among the program, financial and logistic departments. The identification of a budget holder could also improve monitoring of expenses.
- The recently introduced **organization chart** devises an efficient decision making process and develops a more effective links among departments. Its implementation needs to be supervised at country and regional coordination levels to avoid weakening the lines of coordination for departments of project support. Familiarity with new lines of coordination between FSL advisor and Field Coordinator has still to be improved, as well as changes of hierarchic relations between the FSL and the PM.
- Distribution and knowledge among the program’s staff of humanitarian standards guidelines is recommended: International Red Cross Code of Conduct, Do not Harm Handbook, Integrated Conflict Analysis, Sphere Project Standards, HAP.

5.2 Intervention model

- More implication from all the concerned actors in devising targeting criteria, project strategy and activities After field discussions with communities is found that ACF should consider the **participatory need assessment** to the proposal stage preliminary analysis,. This means not only the involvement of local communities, which is however the most important actor which allows a correct identification of strategy and orienting equipment selection, but also of the different departments of the agency merging inputs from program, finance and logistic. Identification of infrastructures to be rehabilitated has to involve local authorities in charge, thus preventing from mistakes in evaluation and improving the connectedness. Likewise the evaluation of IGA acceptance into communities and participatory delineation of the right amount to be transferred should have prevented from exposition to risks of national staff and beneficiaries
- The **Logical Framework** is a key tool for project implementation, to be devised following a clear horizontal logic with identification of results for each objective, indicators and related main activities. For each indicator a measurable SOV should be set, thus giving since the proposal stage a

⁵ John Snow Inc./DELIVER, 2004. The Logistics Handbook: A Practical Guide for Supply Chain Managers in Family Planning and Health Programs. Arlington, Va.: John Snow Inc./DELIVER, for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

clear idea of challenges of progress monitoring. Impact indicators can be used in emergency context only if measurable. Reporting would be easier using output indicators, nevertheless an effort is required to partners, according to OFDA guidelines, to develop measurable impact indicators for result.

- Assessment of effectiveness of **IGA** model reveal very limited results and negative side effects in raising tensions inside communities. ACF should revise its strategy to reinforce the understanding of roles and rights of members of the associations and the consistent utilization of economic management tools, as well as tailor the IGA model to the context analysis including arising marketing opportunities

5.3 Capacity building

- **Empowerment** of Community Based Organizations (CBO) was limited thus affecting the effectiveness of handover to communities of social infrastructures rehabilitated. Community mobilization and identification of CBO should start from the beginning of activities instead of at their achievement, thus improving ownership and having a longer time for building capacities. Long lasting proximity to committees will also improve project’s understanding of community management mechanisms.
- Strengthening of **coping strategies** is a key tool in enhancing capacities as well as appropriateness: Here some examples related to the project:
 - a) IDPs Households use to work on community bases for fields farming, through mechanisms of mutual help to carry out the heaviest works of field preparation and harvesting. Programs should reinforce these practices and facilitate their consolidation in more structured forms of collaboration such as associations or groups.
 - b) Gardening activities could have been relevant for anglers associations, thus improving their food security during the dry season, which is the less productive for fisheries. They already use to shift toward field crops though activities are limited as the lack of rain, whilst gardening could give good results. Availability of water is also higher for anglers, normally living close to rivers. This strategy could also have a positive side impact on environmental protection encouraging the suspension of fishing activities for few months.
 - c) Capacity building of members of IGA associations was limited due mainly to the project strategy not adequate to the context. The existing system of community based micro credit within women associations (*tontine*) should have been strengthened and merged to IGA. Investments for association or members should have been oriented according to a deep market analysis and the account management reinforced by trainings in the consistent utilization of specific tools. This approach could also limit the challenge of large amount cash transfer.

5.4 Food Security

- As found and discussed with ACF project staff, the selection, assistance and **monitoring of households** for farming and gardening was a unachievable commitment considering the number (1.000 HH). Grouping of farmers in associations limits the challenges of identification of most vulnerable, facilitate the implementation and scales up results enhancing existing mechanisms of mutual assistance

- After observation of farmers **storage capacity**, programs should reinforce it foreseeing construction of community warehouses. This is always recommended when improving crops production and it is mandatory in implementation of seeds multiplication as production are to be sold after several months from harvesting.
- After discussion with as discussed with communities and ITAPEL, **water availability** is an important criterion for the gardening production to maximize impact on food security exploiting dry season. Simple upgraded irrigation systems should be integrated in the methodology to optimize the water consummation (e.g. drip irrigation)
- Discussions with local communities reveal the lack of opportunities of meeting and exchange between farmers. Mere seeds distribution should be more significant if implemented organizing **fairs of local producers** were beneficiaries can buy seeds using conditional vouchers. Again, quality of seeds available has to be assured by the agency (type of seeds, germination tests). Project should as well promote participation of humanitarian actors of food security.
- More efforts should be carried on to improve use **conservative agriculture techniques** when supporting agricultural development, in order to control the environmental impact of improved farmers exploitation capacities. Besides, sedentary agriculture in similar context would improve security of farmers.

5.5 Economic Recovery

- After the challenges faced in implementation, ACF should merge a deeper context analysis when devising strategy for ER in terms of understanding social mechanisms and habits to orient the project approach. Sensitization campaigns are usually a good tool to improve **awareness** of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries about wider benefits for community beyond the personal ones for targeted HH, leading to an improvement in acceptance.
- The market analysis should be oriented to identify rentable activities as well as **gaps in services** availability. High cost/beneficiary and individual benefit could be better accepted if implementation addresses also community need to improve access to services (e.g. tailors mills, welding)
- FGD with beneficiaries reveal a huge need in trainings and **technical capacity building**. One of the outputs of IGA should be the improvement of local skills or even the introduction of new crafts as soon as gaps are remarked, thus guaranteeing long term benefits to the whole community
- After field observation, accountable management is not achieved in IGA. Lay out and utilization of basic financial management tools should be pursued to achieve a veritable empowerment of all the members and make more business that is more profitable.
- FGD with CFW beneficiaries for markets rehabilitation and farmers associations reveal lack of community **participation in markets management**. Involvement of farmers and economic associations in management of market systems would had scaled up effectiveness of synergies among the two sectors of intervention (FS and ER)
- **CFW outputs and indicators** should focus on personal/community benefits of payout instead of being related to structure rehabilitation works.
- **Local purchasing** of seeds from economic/farmers associations previously supported by ACF had a relevant impact on associations economy and improved the timing of distributions. Quality should be still guaranteed assessing variety and providing germination tests. This strategy as well as advocacy for similar ones into humanitarian coordination should be prosecuted by ACF.
- Following visits to some of the markets rehabilitated, ACF should attend **minimum standards in hygiene and sanitation** in terms of availability of facilities and awareness about their utilization.

5.6 Good governance

- Local institutions **performance and accountability** could be improved using specific indicators for its monitoring. Awareness of communities about objectives and commitments of institutional and not-institutional leaders would help them to play a relevant role in their monitoring and better understanding their rights. Partnership with governmental actors belongs to project connectedness strategy. The commitment of governmental actors in respecting the agreements set up at local level could be improved devising similar agreements at provincial and regional level, whilst at national level the coordination relies on Clusters. Amount of allowance given to motivate the collaboration should be related to monthly salary earned by the governmental staff

5.7 Monitoring system

- Implementation of Monitoring was remarked as laid out with adequate tools but limited in effectiveness of utilization. Programs department heads should devise the **schedule of monitoring** implementation, results of monitoring analysis and provide feedback to project.
- **Delays** in projects start up and implementation definitely affects capacity to monitoring the results and hinders the possibility to get back to project with useful inputs.
- **Feedback and complaint mechanisms** from community should be properly set and used, helping the project to carry on an effective monitoring out of structured surveys, as well as guaranteeing open communication channels with the most vulnerable part of the population, often not enough represented at community level. Simple complaint feedback mechanisms such as telephone numbers and , complaint box have to be open at least during distributions, CFW payments and key steps of implementation

Criteria	Rating (0 low, 5 high)					Rationale
	1	2	3	4	5	
Impact			X			- Overall good impact in enhancing productive capacities introducing durable technical solutions and reinforcing connection with governmental actors (ITAPEL) is mitigated by limited empowerment of economic associations, not adequately supported in building management capacities and improving members' understanding of their role and rights - Rehabilitation of outreach infrastructures have positive impact reducing isolation and improving trading, yet narrow empowerment of CBO limits capacities in maintenance and production of economic benefits (e.g. utilization of the income generated by the markets for their maintenance, sanitation, access to water etc.. instead of for community leaders' personal benefit). - Utilization of impact indicators to be developed further.
Connectedness			X			- Institutional actors concerned, Public Works Department for infrastructures and ITAPEL for agriculture and fishery, are involved in all stages of project implementation. - ITAPEL capacity is reinforced and its partnership with ACF supported by signing two MoU, one related to implementation and one to the project follow up. - Community ownership of innovative agriculture and fishery inputs is relevant and scales up their consolidation. - Community management, though foreseen for a sustainable maintenance of infrastructures, is not effective as committees were identified at the project end instead of being associated to the implementation, therefore their awareness and capacity is still narrow.
Coherence				X		- Project activities are overall coherent with project results in the frame of a solid strategy - Consistency with humanitarian policies is reinforced by the role of sub-cluster

						facilitator played by ACF. ▪ Coordination with local actors is consistent and effective, based on the signature of agreements. ▪ Community Leaders understanding and acceptance of the operation was quite challenging though they were regularly informed about planning of activities; the fact was mainly related to absence of community participation at proposal stage and consequent devising of some activities (such as the IGA) not adequate to the context
Coverage					X	▪ Significant geographical coverage of population in need, working in high vulnerable areas not covered by other humanitarian actors. Initial fragile targeting strategies, based on selection criteria too generic (low income for large families/ access to land but few production tools/absence of seeds stock) to allow a clear identification of beneficiaries have been readapted during the implementation. ▪ Revised strategy relies on beneficiary lists provided by communities and beneficiaries identification was done using adequate combination of multiple criteria, overall well understood by beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. ▪ IDPs and host families had equal access to assistance thus reinforcing conflict mitigation.
Relevance / Appropriateness		X				▪ Assessment not accurate in identification of needs priorities though the tools are overall available and adequate for ACF ▪ Beneficiaries and communities were not involved at proposal stage; however, targeting strategies implemented are suitable. ▪ Fragile evaluation of risks and under estimation of resources needed for the project implementation. ▪ Some inaccuracies are remarked in the LF devising of indicators. The work plan wasn't designed at proposal stage, thus missing a consistent analysis of project congruence with agricultural/rainy season.
Effectiveness			X			▪ Delays in project start up, in defining a work plan and in purchasing and distribution to field of key items partially limited the effectiveness, though the indicators are overall attended. ▪ Some of the findings of assessment at proposal stage were revised during the thorough assessment with the identification of more relevant needs in

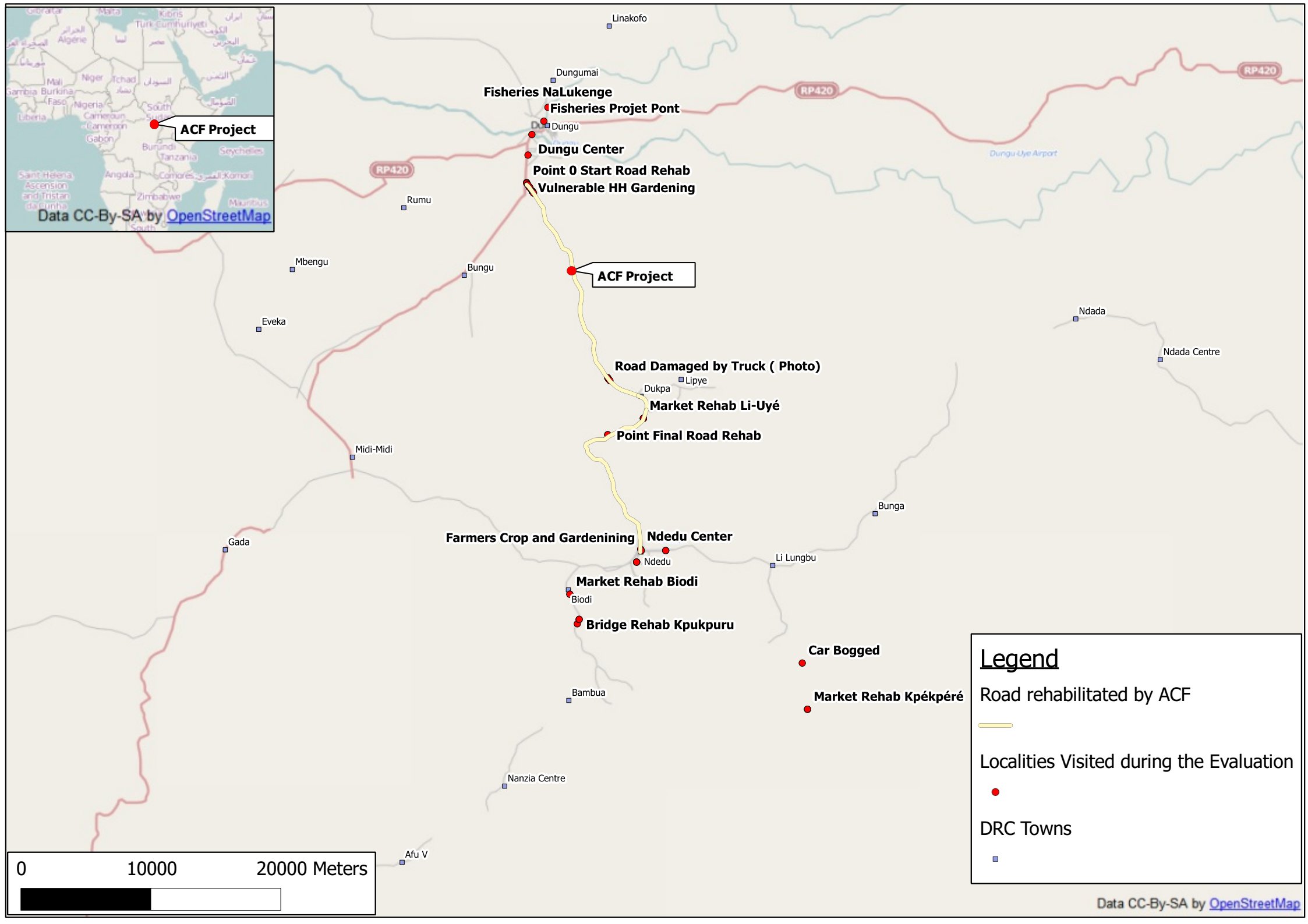
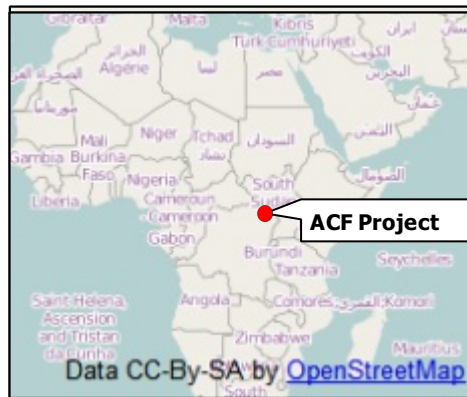
Final Evaluation AID-OFDA-G-12-00180 (B2I) – Rank table

						infrastructures rehabilitation according to participatory discussions carried out with local communities. ▪ Strategy for seeds multiplication was also revised following farmers' recommendations and project technical staff analysis, thus changing the activity in crops cultivation using quality seeds and distribution of productions following the existing rules and habits. ▪ IGA have been implemented according to the project outline, nevertheless outputs and benefits are narrow both for associations and communities.
Efficiency		X				▪ Clear logistic and administrative procedures, organization chart and decision making didn't prevent from challenges in timely project start up and logistic performance, which reduced the cost effectiveness. ▪ The progressive merging of the recently revised organization chart will reinforce internal decision making process once fully achieved. To be noticed that this change was not expected for the base of the project implementation as this was the last intervention planned by the organization.

Title of best practice	Maximizing local benefits - Consolidating partnerships choosing quality local purchase of seeds revitalizing bonds with prior ACF operations
Innovative Features & Key Characteristics	The research of quality seeds for activities of multiplication and farmer production was oriented locally, assessing capacities of farmers associations supported by ACF in 2010 (projects funded by OFDA and Pooled Fund implemented in Niangara and Rungu) to provide timely supply of goods needed. The whole quantity of rice needed for distributions to vulnerable HH (10 tons) and to associations for seeds multiplication (1,5 tons) was purchased locally, as well as the whole quantity of peanuts seeds (2,1 tons) and cassava cuttings (75.000 m.l.) needed for distribution to farmer's associations for seeds multiplication. Prices had been evaluated and compared to the local and national market and quality had been assessed on features of varieties available as well as carrying out in vitro and in situ germination tests. a) Favoring local purchasing. Whenever quality is guaranteed local purchasing is a relevant additional benefit for local communities, thus getting the most of the resources allocated by the operation. b) Assuring quality of goods. A thorough assessment of quantity and quality of seeds available has been carried out, resulting in discovery a significant capacity of associations in supplying varieties and amounts as needed for project activities. Germination tests matched quality standards. c) Improving connectedness. Quality certification have been implemented by SENASEM (<i>Service National de Semences</i>), the local governmental actor in charge, scaling up project connectedness and continual capacity building d) Advocacy. Findings of field evaluation and tests results had been shared with the international community (FSL sub-cluster, OCHA) to advocate for other agencies to adopt the same strategy of local purchasing from qualified associations; hence the same policy was embraced by PU

	e) Doing an effective monitoring of the impact of prior programs deeply assessing producers' capacity achieved and the changes occurred in local productions, carrying out an evaluation mission and producing an exhaustive mission report. f) Improving accountability and acceptance. This strategy received a very high appreciation from local community, feeling more involved in the project and more motivated in keeping on pursuing quality productions. g) Scaling up efficiency. The timing for seeds purchasing and distribution was remarkably reduced compared to the forecast for carrying out a national procurement, allowing the project to distribute the goods at the right time according to agricultural season. Accountability toward the agency procedures and donors is maintained as quality and cost-effectiveness is guaranteed
Practical/Specific Recommendations for Roll Out	➤ A mapping of different producers associations supported by the agency during the whole duration of its presence in the country of operation can help following projects in identification of possibilities of using local supply from accountable associations whose capacities had been adequately reinforced. ➤ The local purchasing has to be foreseen at proposal stage in order to agree with the donor about appropriate purchasing procedures applicable yet respecting basic procurements rules to guarantee cost-effectiveness and transparency ➤ Advocacy through sharing of information with the international community about availability of qualified local suppliers detailed by mapping and contacts ➤ Always consider the organization of fairs of producers as key activity during the FSL programs, thus facilitating spreading of information about agricultural items available in the local market and facilitating monitoring of prices.

VISITE TERRAIN DUNGU EVALUATION FINALE OFDA B2I			
Jour et Date	Activités réalisées	Axes	Staffs
Lundi 15/07/2013	Voyage Bukavu - Goma	Port Bukavu - Port Goma	Evaluatrice, logistique
Mardi 16/07/13	am-Arrivée de l'Evaluatrice à la Base de Dungu briefing avec PM et chefs de projet pm-	Aéroport - Base ACF	Administration/Logistique/Evaluatrice, PM, Deux Chefs du Projet
Mercredi 17/07/2013	Briefing PM - Visite réhabilitation route et entretien bénéficiaires CxW	Dungu - Li Uye	Evaluatrice, PM et Deux Chefs du Projet, Logistique
Jeudi 18/07/2013	Li-Uyé Rencontre des leaders communautaires, entretien bénéficiaires CxW et visite du marché réhabilité - Kpekpere visite du marché réhabilité et entretien bénéficiaires CxW ; interview bénéficiaires AGR	Ndedu- Li-Uyé - Kpekpere	Evaluatrice, Deux Chefs du Projet, Superviseurs, Logistique
vendredi 19/07/2013	Visite et entretien avec les bénéficiaires des volets vivrier et multiplication semences (Association CDM), CxW, réhabilitation marché, bénéficiaires AGR (Association Mekanzoto), Réhabilitation pont Kpukpuru axe Bodi/Afu. Ndedu: Visite et entretien avec les bénéficiaires individuels du volets vivrier (population locale et déplacées)	Ndedu - Bodi - Afu	Evaluatrice, Deux Chefs du Projet, Superviseurs, Logistique
Samedi 20/07/2013	Dungu: Visite et entretien avec les associations des pechers (MAM 1 et 2, Na Lukenge 1) visite et entretien AGR (Association Ba Limanga), desk review des outils de monitoring	Bodi - Ndedu - Dungu	Evaluatrice, Deux Chefs du Projet, Superviseurs, Technicien ITAPEL
Dimanche 21/07/2013	Dungu: Visite et entretien avec les associations des pechers (Pont 1 et 2), visite bénéficiaires des volets vivrier et marachaire (Nadogolo1, pop loc et déplacée), multiplication semences (Nadogolo 2)	Dungu	Evaluatrice, Deux Chefs du Projet, Superviseurs, Technicien ITAPEL
Lundi 22/07/2013 a.m.	Dungu: Rencontre avec les bénéficiaires AGR (Association Bomoko). Rencontre avec les stakeholders locaux (ITAPEL, Administrateur du Territoire de Dungu) et internationaux (FAO, OCHA).	Dungu - Centre	Evaluatrice, Deux Chefs du Projet, Technicien ITAPEL
Lundi 22/07/2013 p.m.	Debriefing avec l'equipe ACF Dungu	Dungu - Centre	Evaluatrice, PM, CDB, Chefs de Projets, Superviseurs, Admin, Log
Mardi 23/07/2013	Départ avec UNHAS flight	Aéroport - Base ACF	Logistique/Evaluatrice



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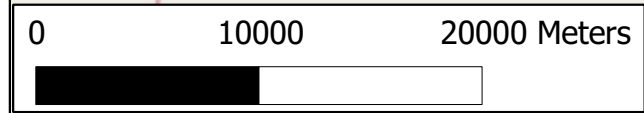
 Road rehabilitated by ACF



Localities Visited during the Evaluation



DRC Towns





TERMS OF REFERENCE

For the Final Evaluation of ACF's Programme

*Program to restore food production and livelihoods of populations affected by the conflict in
Dungu Territory, Haut Uele, Democratic Republic of Congo*

Programme Funded by
OFDA

These Terms of Reference are subject to change before the signing of the contract.

June 2013

1. CONTRACTUAL DETAILS OF THE EVALUATION

1.1. Key Evaluation Dates

Expected Start Date:	1 July 2013
End Date:	30 July 2013
Submission of Draft Report	23 July 2013
Submission of Final Report	30 July 2013

1.2. Language of the Evaluation

Language Requirements for the Evaluation:	English, French
Language of the Report:	English

1.3. Workplan & Timetable

Activities	Working Days
Briefing HQ (teleconference) + preparation	1
Travel to mission (Bukavu)	1
Briefing mission (Bukavu), review of documents, preparation of fieldwork + evaluation framework including methodology.	3
Field work (Dungu)	10
Collection of secondary information from team in Bukavu and Kinshasa (capitals East and West) and meeting with OFDA (Kinshasa)	2 + 1
Data analysis and preparation of the draft report	3
Debriefing and presentation of preliminary findings in-country on the basis of the draft report, Skype debriefing with Desk Officer, submission of draft report	2
Travel back from mission	1
Finalization of the report on the basis of Field, HQ and ACF-UK Feedback	5
Submission of final report	1
Total	30

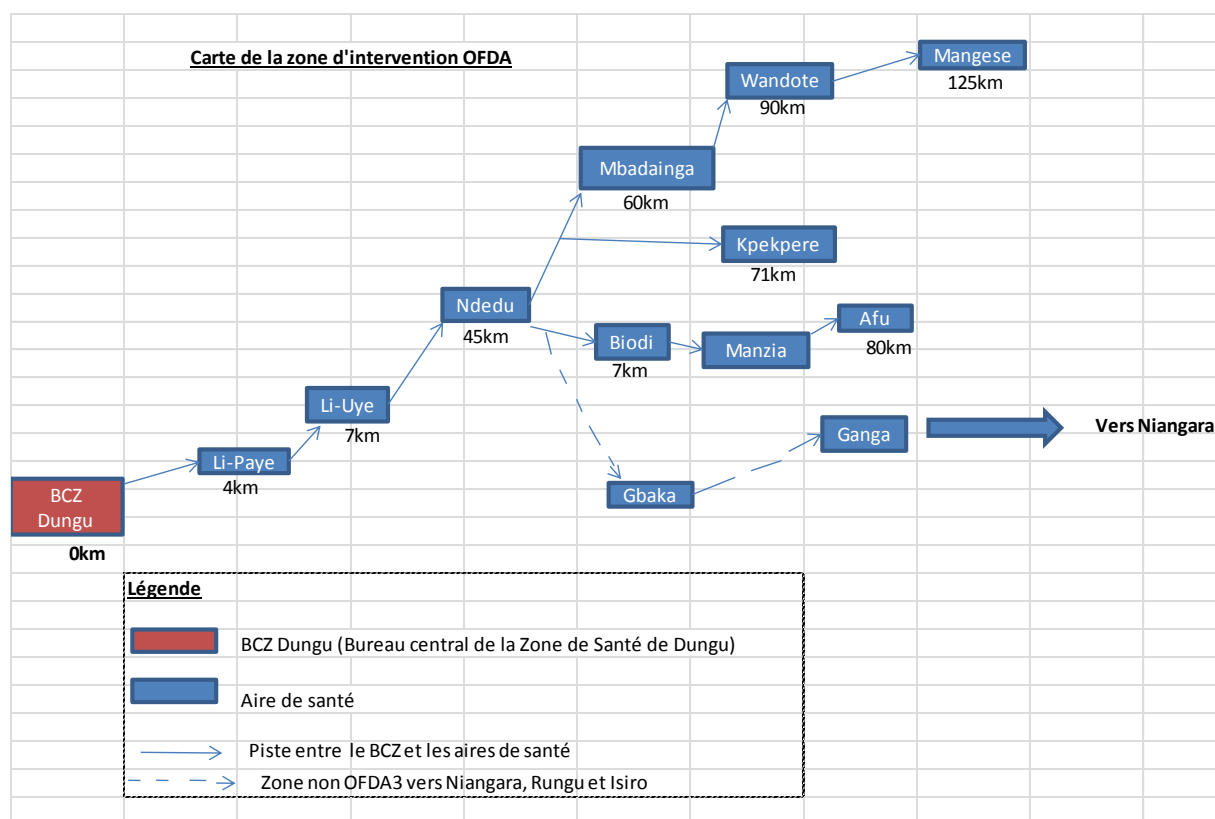
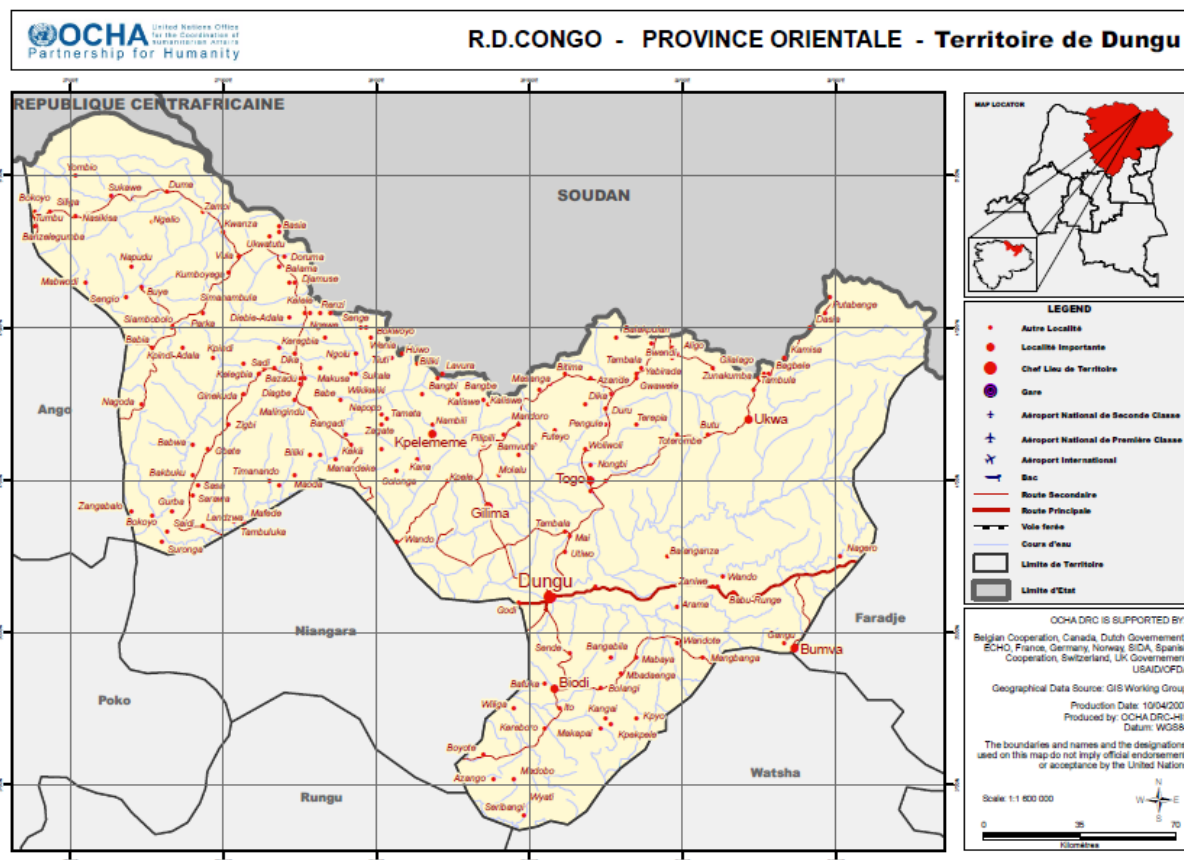
1.4. Budget Details/Conditions

The consultant will be paid a daily rate. ACF will cover flights and visa costs.

2. DETAILS OF THE PROGRAMME

Name of the Programme:	Program to restore food production and livelihoods of populations affected by the conflict in Dungu Territory, Haut Uele
Location:	Dungu Territory, Haut Uele, DRC
Starting Date:	8 August 2012
End Date:	7 August 2013

2.1. Map of Programme Area



2.2. Programme Overview

The arrival of large numbers of displaced persons following attacks in the south of the Dungu health zone in March 2012 substantially increased pressure on available food resources by sharply increasing demand and resource sharing by host populations. Most displaced persons in this zone come from the north and northeast of Dungu territory due to:

- Stabilization of the security situation in this part of the province
- Access to agricultural lands in the area's villages
- Preference for cultivation in primary forest settings
- Constrained land access and high cost of living in large centers such as Dungu town

The armed conflicts seen in Dungu territory since 2009 have largely contributed to a progressive deceleration of the entire economic and social development process. The high level of destitution of local populations is evident in the deterioration of the area's socioeconomic fabric (i.e. abandonment and looting of coffee, cocoa, cotton, and palm oil plantations; absence of agricultural and livestock infrastructure; inadequate technical support to productive activities by government extension services), and decreasing agricultural output. In addition the area suffers from weak transport and commercialization of its agricultural production. This progressive deterioration in the rural economy has transformed a previously resilient and surplus-producing agricultural production system into essentially a subsistence economy, further weakening crisis-affected populations.

The "Program to restore food production and livelihoods of populations affected by the conflict in Dungu Territory, Haut Uele" in 2012-13 followed two other food security and livelihoods support programs in the area in 2010-11 and 2011-12, and in the past ACF has also carried out nutrition activities in Haut Uele and Bas Uele.

To assist in the identification of priority needs and gaps, an ACF exploratory mission was commissioned in the health zone of Dungu in April 2012, with the following main findings:

- Lack of agricultural and fishery production inputs on local markets and in households
- Physical isolation of the area due to poor condition of agricultural access roads and bridges connecting production centers to markets; such is the case for the Dungu-Ndedu, Ndedu-Tora axes
- Lack or disrepair of basic infrastructure including markets, such as markets in the health areas of Kpekperé, Mabadainga, Ndedu, Wandote, Mangese and Li-Uye
- Loss of household income due to continual population displacements and widespread insecurity
- Deterioration in the nutritional situation of local populations (displaced families, returned families, host families)

The program thus sought to restore and strengthen livelihoods in conflicted affected communities by facilitating access to agricultural inputs by vulnerable households and associations, building capacity in improved agricultural and fishery methods, rehabilitating key community infrastructure (markets, agricultural access roads, bridges) and supporting the restoration of economic assets.

2.3. General Objective

To improve the economic conditions of vulnerable populations in the Dungu health zone affected by the conflict (displaced, returned, and resident households with specific vulnerabilities) by means of agricultural and fishing production development, agricultural processing activities and access to markets for improved access to revenue, basic goods and a balanced diet.

2.4. Specific Objectives/Results

Sector:	Agriculture and Food Security
Sub-sector:	Seed system and agricultural input
Indicator 1:	6 months of food self-sufficiency due to distributed seed systems/ agricultural input for beneficiary families
Indicator 2:	1750 Households (10,500 Individuals) benefiting from seed systems /agricultural input activities
Sub- sector:	Fisheries
Indicator 1:	400 people trained in fisheries
Indicator 2:	400 Households (2400 individuals) benefiting from fisheries activities
Indicator 3:	50 Kilograms of fish catch/fisher/month
Sector:	Economic Recovery and Market Systems
Sub- sector:	Market Infrastructure Rehabilitation
Indicator 1:	6 market infrastructure, 25 km road and 4 bridges rehabilitated
Sub-sector	Economic Asset Restoration
Indicator 1:	500 Households (3000 Individuals) assisted through economic asset restoration activities
Indicator 2:	15,000 USD channeled into the local economy (through cash grants, vouchers, livelihood fairs, etc.)

3. AIM OF THE EVALUATION**3.1. Target User(s) of the Evaluation**

OFDA	Various
Implementing HQ	Desk Officer, FSL Technical Advisor
Field Level	Country Director, FSL Country Coordinator, FSL Eastern Regional

	Coordinator, FSL Program Manager Dungu, Head of Base Dungu
Other	Local communities, local authorities, FSL Sub-cluster in Dungu, other humanitarian actors operating in Dungu area, ACF ELA Unit.

3.2. Overall Objective of the Evaluation

The principal objective of the external evaluation is to study the impact, effectiveness and efficacy of the program, and the engagement of key stakeholders particularly at the local level.

3.3. Specific Objectives of the Evaluation

- 1) Provide a report detailing evaluation findings on the impact, effectiveness and efficacy of the program and the engagement of key local stakeholders.
- 2) Provide a SWOT analysis of the overall program with concrete recommendations on how to capitalize on opportunities resulting from the program (e.g. replication or scale-up, technical innovations) and identify and examine the relative degree to which internal weaknesses and external challenges affected program implementation and adaptation.
- 3) Assess the quality and level of community participation.

3.4. Scope of the Evaluation

Impact

The evaluator will assess the broad effects of the program. Impact may be over the short, medium or long term, intentional or not, positive or negative, macro (at the level of the community) or micro (household), economic, agronomic or social. In this case as the evaluation will happen just following the end of program activities, the evaluator may focus on short term impact.

- ✓ What are the indications, direct or indirect that the action has contributed to the achieving the project objective?
- ✓ Have the project objectives and indicators as presented in the LFA been achieved, at least in part?
- ✓ Are the means and indicators used to evaluate the impact of the program adequate? Is there a way to improve both the impact of the project and its measurement?
- ✓ What are the economic, agronomic, social and any other impacts of the program in the short term, both at the level of the household and the level of the community?
- ✓ Is the approach piloted in this project expected to sustainably improve the livelihoods of farmers and fishers in the area? If not, what are the adjustments to the approach that should be brought in order to increase the impact?

Relevance

The evaluator will assess the appropriateness of the objective and results pursued by the program in relation to the identified needs.

- ✓ Was the contextual analysis and identification of priority needs of target communities adequate (methodology, findings, conclusion and recommendations)? Were the risks correctly identified?
- ✓ Was the involvement of beneficiaries ensured in the design and implementation phases?
- ✓ Did this analysis lead to the elaboration of adequate objectives in relation to the priority needs identified?
- ✓ Are the activities relevant and appropriate?

Coverage

The evaluator will assess the coverage of the program in relation to the identified needs.

- ✓ Is an adequate percentage of the needs covered (>80%)?
- ✓ Were the worst-affected, poorest or most marginalized groups correctly identified?
- ✓ Was there appropriate geographical coverage?
- ✓ Was there fair targeting of beneficiaries?
- ✓ What is the degree of knowledge of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries on the program, its objectives and its targeting criteria?

Coherence

The evaluator will assess the adequacy of the activities that were implemented in relation to the objectives and results pursued by the program.

- ✓ Did the activities have a direct relationship with the objectives and results pursued?

- ✓ Were the activities adequately coordinated with other development and local actors, in particular the IPAPPEL?
- ✓ Did the authorities and communities understand, accept and welcome ACF's program?
- ✓ What were the main constraints faced with regard to coherence and coordination, how were they managed and how could ACF have improved on their management?

Effectiveness

The evaluator will assess the adequacy of the results that were reached in relation to the objectives and results that were pursued by the program.

- ✓ Will the program reach the intended results and objectives?
- ✓ If not, what are the factors and constraints for the risk of non-achievement? What hampered the achievement of the targets? Has the organisation anticipated the constraints? Has the organisation reacted adequately to unforeseen events and re-adjusted/ adapted the program to ensure the achievement or the readjustment of the objective and results pursued by the program?
- ✓ Is the information correctly passed onto the communities and authorities?

Efficiency

The evaluator will assess the cost-efficiency of the program.

- ✓ Was the program cost-effective?
- ✓ Are the log / admin procedures well understood, accepted and respected by everyone in particular the target communities, partners and authorities?
- ✓ Is the internal coordination and communication efficient?

Monitoring and Evaluation

The evaluator will assess whether appropriate M&E systems were established and implemented in the framework of the project.

- ✓ What are the progress and impact tools that were used? Were they effectively utilized? How might they be improved?
- ✓ Are the indicators well adapted, and if not, what are the recommendations for improving them?
- ✓ Have the achievements of the project been effectively documented and analysed?
- ✓ Were the results of the monitoring available in a timely manner in order to effectively inform decision-making? If not, what were the constraints faced and how might they be addressed?
- ✓ Have the results of the monitoring been used to improve the program?

Cross cutting issues

The evaluator will assess how the following cross-cutting issues have been taken into account at all stages of program implementation so far:

- ✓ Gender
- ✓ Community Participation

3.4. Evaluation Criteria

ACF subscribes to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria for evaluation: Impact, Sustainability, Coherence, Coverage, Relevance / Appropriateness, Effectiveness and Efficiency. ACF also promotes systematic analysis of the monitoring system and cross cutting issues (gender, HIV/AIDS etc). All external evaluations are expected to use DAC criteria in data analysis and reporting. In particular, the evaluation must complete the following table and include it as part of the final report.

The evaluator will be expected to use the following table to rank the performance of the overall intervention using the DAC criteria. The table should be included as an Annex to the report.

Criteria	Rating (1 low, 5 high)					Rationale
	1	2	3	4	5	
Impact						
(Sustainability)						n/a for this evaluation
Coherence						
Coverage						
Relevance/Appropriateness						
Effectiveness						
Efficiency						

3.5. Best Practices

The evaluation is expected to provide one (1) key example of Best Practice from the project/programme. This example should relate to the technical area of intervention, either in terms of processes or systems, and should be potentially applicable to other contexts where ACF operates. This example of Best Practice should be presented as an Annex to the report.

3.6. Evaluation Outputs

The result of this evaluation should be presented in a written report and through several oral presentations:

- One on the mission (to Head of Mission and relevant technical staff)
- One at HQ (in person or via teleconference).

3.7. Methodology

3.7.1. Preparation

Review of project documents (proposal, logical framework, donor reports, activity and monitoring reports, assessment reports, capitalisation documents, budget follow-up, etc.)

3.7.2. Briefing

Prior to the evaluation taking place, the evaluator is expected to attend a briefing at HQ level, and at field level with the Head of Mission and/or the relevant technical focal point. Briefings by telephone must be agreed in advance.

3.7.3. Field activities

Consultants are expected to collect an appropriate range of data. This includes (but not limited to):

- Direct information: Primary data collection using standard and participatory evaluation methods (e.g. semi structured interviews, FGD and observation) in households and communities.
- Indirect information: Interviews with local representatives; interviews with project staff expatriate and national staff; meeting with local and provincial authorities (e.g. IPAPPEL), groups of beneficiaries, humanitarian agencies, donor representatives and other stakeholders. For indirect data collection, standard and participatory evaluation methods are expected to be used (HH interviews and FGDs with beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries, key informants – health workers, teachers and leaders).
- Secondary information analysis: including analysis of project monitoring data or of any other relevant secondary data.

3.7.4. Report

The report shall follow the following format.

- Cover Page
- Table of Contents
- Executive Summary: must be a standalone summary, describing the programme, main findings of the evaluation, and conclusions and recommendations. This will be no more than 2 pages in length.
- Main Body: The main body of the report shall elaborate the points listed in the Executive Summary. It will include references to the methodology used for the evaluation and the context of the action. In particular, for each key conclusion there should be a corresponding recommendation. Recommendations should be as realistic, operational and pragmatic as possible; that is, they should take careful account of the circumstances currently prevailing in the context of the action, and of the resources available to implement it both locally and in the commissioning HQ. Annexes: Listed and correctly numbered. Format for the main body of the report is:
 - Background Information
 - Methodology
 - Findings & Discussions
 - Conclusions Recommendations
 - Annex I (Best Practice)
 - Annex II (DAC-based Rating Table)

The report should be submitted in the language specified in the ToR. The report should not be longer than 30 pages excluding annexes. The draft report should be submitted no later than 25 July 2013. The final report will be submitted no later than the end date of the consultancy contract. Annexes to the report will be accepted in the working language of the country and programme subject to the evaluation.

3.7.5. Debriefing & Learning Workshop

The evaluator should facilitate a learning workshop:

- To present the draft report and the findings of the evaluation to the ACF DRC Team and other stakeholders.
- To gather feedback on the findings and build consensus on recommendations.
- To develop action-oriented workshop statements on lessons learned and proposed improvements for the future.

3.7.6. Debriefing with ACF HQ

The evaluator should provide a debriefing via Skype with ACF HQ in New York on her/his draft report, and on the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation. Relevant comments should be incorporated in the final report.

4. RESOURCES AND DOCUMENTATION

The following documentation will be made available:

- Project proposal
- Budget
- Quarterly reports
- Monitoring Reports
- Any other relevant document

5. PROFILE OF THE EVALUATOR

- Able to work and converse in French and English and produce a final report in English
- Advanced experience in one of the following or related fields: Food Security, Livelihoods, Agronomy, Fisheries/Wildlife/Forestry, Rural Development, Humanitarian Affairs
- Field experience in the evaluation of humanitarian / development projects for major donors.
- Experience in coordination, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes
- Good communications skills and experience of workshop facilitation
- Ability to write clear and useful reports (may be required to produce examples of previous work)
- Ability to manage the available time and resources and to work to tight deadlines
- Independence from the parties involved

6. RIGHTS

The ownership of the draft and final documentation belong to the agency and the funding donor exclusively. The document, or publication related to it, will not be shared with anybody except ACF before the delivery by ACF of the final document to the donor.

ACF is to be the main addressee of the evaluation and its results might impact on both operational and technical strategies. This being said, ACF is likely to share the results of the evaluation with the following groups:

- Donor(s)
- Governmental partners
- Various co-ordination bodies

Intellectual Property Rights

All documentation related to the Assignment (whether or not in the course of the evaluator's duties) shall remain the sole and exclusive property of the Charity