

REAL-TIME EVALUATION

of

**World Vision Mozambique's Response
to Cyclones Idai and Kenneth**

October 2019



SOUTHERN AFRICA FLOODS & CYCLONE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

SAFCER



Executive Summary

In Mozambique, over 2.2 million people were estimated to need humanitarian assistance following Cyclone Idai and Kenneth. At least 648 people were killed with 1,700 people injured (Government of Mozambique). Initial assessments suggested an estimated 260,000 children were affected (UNICEF), but this number has been revised to approximately half of all affected or 1.1 million children. Approximately 770,000 hectares of land and crops were submerged by water, resulting in tens of thousands of people becoming stranded on rooftops and in trees and destroying crops and livelihoods. Initial estimates from UNOCHA suggested that at least 131,000 people sheltered in more than 161 sites across Sofala (119); Manica (27); Zambezia (11) and Tete (4) provinces. According to government estimates more than 277,700 homes and 4,200 classrooms were damaged or destroyed. More than 74,600 women impacted by the cyclone were estimated to be pregnant, of whom 60 per cent (43,000) are expected to give birth in the next six months. Pre-existing protection risks for these women and other vulnerable groups were exacerbated by the effects of the cyclones. Many, if not all, spheres of life, health and well-being were severely impacted.

World Vision's (WV's) Southern Africa Floods & Cyclone Emergency Response (SAFCER) in Mozambique was declared on 21 March as a Category 3 Global Response. On 2 May a Cat 1, national office (NO) response was declared for Cyclone Kenneth; this was rolled-up into SAFCER. To date, WV has projects in water sanitation and hygiene (WASH), food assistance, livelihoods, education, child protection as well as health and nutrition.

The objective of the response is to save lives and alleviate human suffering for those affected by Cyclone Idai and flooding in Sofala, Manica and Zambezia provinces. WV's response has significantly exceeded its beneficiary target of 350,000 by reaching approximately 429,858 beneficiaries. WV exceeded its funding target of US \$22.8 million by securing approximately US \$29.6 million to date.

The Real Time Evaluation (RTE) of WV Mozambique's response to Cyclone Idai and Kenneth took place in August 2019. The purpose was to assess the response against four criteria (**organisational efficiency, relevance, coordination & influence, and programme effectiveness**) and culminated in a workshop comprising WV staff and partners. Participants validated the findings, refined and prioritised recommendations, and developed action plans around five items for immediate improvement.

Main Findings

Organisational Efficiency

Decisions were based on needs assessments, remained strategic and flexible, despite limited information at times. The initial declaration decision group (DDG) calls were timely and standardised, while decisions were made, they were ultimately incorrect. An initial Cat 1 NO response declaration to Cyclone Idai was made; however, the impact of Cyclone Idai was underestimated and downplayed resulting in a delay of the Cat 3 Global declaration until five days after landfall. WV declined to declare a response to Cyclone Kenneth, received negative feedback from partners, changed its decision and ultimately declared a Cat 1 NO response seven days after landfall.



WV Staff

"P&C: super. It was actually one of the departments that I found that they were spot on, in terms of staff requirement, staff care and travel. They would even follow-up on issues of psychosocial support"



WV leveraged national emergency preparedness and relief funding (NEPRF), EPRF and pooled private non-sponsorship (PNS) for initial financing. A shortfall in PNS has limited staffing; a paper-based finance system, slow uptake of ProVision and delayed approval for and payment of goods and services has delayed procurement, payments and implementation significantly.



"In terms of structure, we hit the ground running and we had a hard-core mandate – EMS structure from the start. Very soon after the declaration, there were many global rapid response team people who arrived."



WV Staff

Deployed, seconded and remotely supporting staff have been skilled and experienced, and (re)trained on processes, roles and tools. The mental and physical well-being of staff has been monitored and cared for through field visits and team building activities. Local recruitment has been slower for technical and longer-term position, due to a limited candidate pool, People & Culture (P&C) capacity and donor-driven, short-term grants and contracts.

Regional and response leadership have been strategic and collaborative. A robust emergency management system (EMS) structure fostered an understanding of roles, as well as an open and solution-focused team culture. However, a lack of clarity of roles, responsibilities and decision-making power still exists at the district level. High turn-over, interim staffing arrangements and lack of a cohesive information management system have contributed to fragmented day-to-day internal coordination and communication.

Information technology (IT) has functioned and generally responded quickly to requests; however, field-level support and staff data protection capacity varies. Security has proactively provided briefings, assessments and plans. Offices were set up and staff trained relatively promptly, despite an initial unclear division of labour between Admin and P&C. An impressive warehousing system was established, although transportation availability is inconsistent at the provincial and field-level.

Supply chain has leveraged ProVision, waivers and prepositioned goods to its advantage. A competitive marketplace, inadequate staffing and unclear procurement processes and relief item specifications have delayed the procurement of goods, at times creating reputational risk. The WV Partnership has been informed via SitReps, Partnership coordination team, Partnership executive team and advocacy response group (ARG) calls, despite inconsistent publication and participation, respectively.



WV Staff

"What slows down is lack of specifications from operations teams. If you want to procure a specific item, you need to provide the best specification to know exactly what is in need. If it doesn't happen it may slow down the procurement process because we will do many communications back and forth to realise what is really needed."



Relevance

Deliberate efforts were made to assess, target and prioritise the most vulnerable including the elderly, disabled and unaccompanied children. However, affected populations report bias in targeting leading to inclusion errors (i.e. allegations of favouritism and double dipping.) It appears the targeting and selection criteria were not fully explained to and/or understood by the community. This was compounded by government generated targeting lists, which WV was unable to verify despite many requests



"We use friendships and relationships to do the [beneficiary] lists sometimes. It's so sad because we suffer."



Generally, WV adhered to humanitarian standards including Sphere, core humanitarian standards (CHS), and Red Cross code of conduct. However, due to operational challenges, it has been observed that some distribution points were beyond five kilometres away from settlements, some child-friendly spaces (CFS) do not have adequate latrines and some settlements are without potable water.

Efforts were put in place to ensure affected populations are provided with programmatic information, consulted, encourage to participate in WV interventions and share complaints and feedback. Importantly, to promote inclusion, WV established and used complementary feedback mechanisms (i.e. suggestion boxes, help desks, toll-free lines and face-to-face approaches). WV provided information to the affected populations through various methods including, text and picture-based banners and pre-distribution addresses. Good community participation was reported in food distributions, WASH committees and in CFS activities. However, greater prioritisation is required to strengthen feedback loops, further promote beneficiaries' rights awareness, implement accountability systems across all sectors, and build staff capacity on CHS and Programme Accountability Framework linkages.



WV Staff

"To a big extent, I would say there was a very good process in terms of ensuring the response was appropriate, affected communities were involved in terms of defining the needs."



WV prioritised staff training on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and safeguarding, which was mandatory for all staff, community volunteers and contractors. This ensured all staff are aware of the expected behaviours and protocols as they deliver humanitarian assistance to the affected population. Humanitarian standards and do-no-harm guide WV's response activities. Limited conflict or harm was reported as a result of WV's response; however, greater humanitarian needs compared to available resources constrained selection criteria and created significant tensions in communities and general frustration with implementing organisations.



"They came and took our names to do a project about raising chickens, but until now, we have no information about this project. This was two months ago."



Beneficiary

"Some people complain and cause conflicts and fights, because they are not registered. Why are our names not in the list when we are suffering?"



Coordination and Influence

WV has generally coordinated well with the government, UN agencies, and other non-government organisations (NGOs) to meet the needs of affected people. Strong technical attendance at cluster meetings and good organisational responsiveness to partner requests were noted by staff and partners alike, and WV has been recognised as a leader in cash and food security clusters and strong in education. Furthermore, the organisation successfully leveraged pre-existing relationships, including the Consorcio Humanitario de Mozambique (CHEMO) consortium to jointly implement activities, and with donors to quickly access funding. However, WV's internal coordination for cluster meeting attendance was weak at the onset of the crisis due to logistical challenges. Certain partners have noted a failure to openly and flexibly share information, including through 4W reporting, about project implementation delays. Furthermore, though WV staff attend coordination meetings at district level on a weekly basis, they do not have devolved decision-making power and so participation is weak.

WV engaged key external media houses (e.g. CNN, BBC, Al Jazeera, SABC) and social media exceptionally well in the days following the cyclone. Though the response has continued to engage media houses over the longer-term, this work has not been visible to large parts of the WV Partnership. Similarly, the response did not proactively engage Partnership leadership nor seize existing opportunities, like Global Centre (GC) Executive Team visits, to raise the profile of the crisis. As a relatively new organisational system, StoryHub was successfully used to curate and disseminate content throughout the Partnership; however, use of wvrelief was inconsistent and to date, key documents like the 90-day response plan, funding matrix, Q&A and some SitReps are still unavailable on the platform. Confusion remains within the Partnership and the response as a whole on which platform should be used for which products; ultimately, failure to capitalise on huge communications potential has thus far reduced the profile of the response.

Strong global support for advocacy emerged at the start of the response and the ARG supported the development of key policy briefs, and WV participated in a number of high-level meetings in Brussels, Geneva and New York on behalf of SAFCER. However, due to a lack of dedicated response advocacy staff, policy briefs and associated messaging were not leveraged strategically or consistently in response activities. Generally, the distinction between communication, advocacy and information management seem poorly understood

Language barriers (Portuguese vs. English) inhibited staff's ability to engage fully in media opportunities, cluster meetings and internal decision-making conversations. Communications dedicated significant time to translating documents from English to Portuguese, which falls outside their mandate.



Programme Effectiveness

To date, WV has exceeded its beneficiary target of 350,000 by reaching an estimated 429,858 affected people largely through food assistance. In addition, beneficiaries appreciated WV for non-food items (NFI) and WASH provision; in fact, partners perceived WV as an early leader for WASH activities. Staff, partners and beneficiaries alike acknowledged the quality of WV's child-friendly and temporary learning spaces (TLS).



WV Staff

"I think we did well in terms of meeting the needs of the communities – mainly in shelter, food, and also because there was an outbreak of cholera, we had to focus on WASH."



Timeliness of the response is mixed. WV quickly reached affected communities with food, NFIs and clean water during the acute phase of the response. WV has also worked to strengthen community capacity to ensure longer term sustainability for resettled communities. However, WV has been slow to clarify a strategy for meeting the needs of affected people over the longer term, particularly in terms of WASH, livelihoods and shelter, in some cases damaging relationships with donors. Furthermore, lack of global technical support within WV for shelter has hampered response capacity to design and implement shelter interventions, even as they emerge as a priority need for beneficiaries



Beneficiary



"If WV hadn't come, we would have suffered many problems like cholera."



WV Staff

"I saw the grant acquisition team [programmes] in country working like mad. Generally doing generally a good job of getting wins."



A competent programmes team worked well with Support Offices (SOs) and GC to quickly write and win major grants from a diverse donor base, including new donors like Education Cannot Wait. WV also leveraged pre-existing donor agreements and exceeded the initial funding target of US \$22,804,981 by receiving US \$29,602,895 (129 per cent) in short-term funding. Donors appreciate WV's flexibility and responsiveness.



"So we're still waiting for the detailed strategy specifically when we talk about early recovery. In Mozambique, given also the size of the response, I think it's not fully defined yet if we should focus or just rather work around the donors and requests and funds that are provided."



WV Staff



Partner

"We appreciate the flexibility of WV, when we asked to increase the case load in one area and decrease the case load in another."



The response strategic intent is realistic, well-aligned with the needs of affected communities and contextually appropriate. Inclusive strategy development and prominent inclusion of safeguarding and accountability from the outset are viewed as strengths. However, the creation and dissemination of the strategic intent and 90-day plan were slightly and significantly delayed respectively per the disaster management standards (DMS). Similarly, the initial 90-day plan has lapsed with an informal quarterly plan, but no formal response plan in place. Tension remains between the need to focus the response around key sectors and activities in order to be more effective, while at the same time meeting priority needs beyond this focus, like shelter.



WV Staff

"The main area of downfall on the DMS was around the timeliness of core planning documents – Response Strategy and 90-days plan."



Certain elements of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are strong in this response, including post-distribution and on-site monitoring per donor requirements and standards, piloting of the Response Dashboard and the decision to carry out a baseline survey, even though its implementation has extended beyond industry-wide “best practice” (90 days). Strong M&E staff capacity, bolstered by rapid deployments, has supported the development and use of robust M&E tools, and internal advocacy from senior management resulted in adequate budgeting for M&E activities. Nonetheless, response-wide M&E data tracking systems are weak which has resulted in an absence of readily available, consolidated and disaggregated data.



“DMT was pushing for M&E budget lines this was happening even before I got there. They’d come to M&E and say, ‘What do you want to do under this project, how much will it cost?’ Perhaps the advocacy from DMT is something that could have contributed to this positive thing in Mozambique.”



Prioritised Recommendations

The five recommendations prioritised by workshop participants are:

- Integrate disaster risk reduction and preparedness education into response activities, raising community awareness of the risks of disasters and climate change
- Clarify roles and responsibilities of leadership and field staff
- Expand use of Last Mile Mobile Solutions (LMMS) across all sectors/projects through deliberate support from leadership
- Decentralise decision-making from Beira to field offices, as appropriate
- Comprehensively expand accountability mechanisms across sectors/interventions

Following prioritisation, action plans were developed for each recommendation through group work. The action plans developed for the recommendations regarding the clarification of roles and the decentralisation of decision-making overlapped significantly. As such, the RTE team suggests that the response work to combine these into one action plan. The response leadership has the mandate and responsibility to ensure that these learnings and recommendations are leveraged to the greatest extent possible, so that organisationally WV is more efficient, and programmatically more relevant, responsive, coordinated and effective for the well-being of the most vulnerable in Mozambique.





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