



Responding to the 2011/12 Food Crisis at the Horn of Africa through South-South and Triangular Cooperation



Practical Experience from WFP's work on South-South and Trilateral Cooperation

Overview

During the 2011/12 hunger crisis in the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia received in-kind contributions (rice, sugar, fish, beans, meat, etc.), worth over USD 13.9 million from countries of the Southern African Development Community (Angola, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia) as well as from Cuba, Sri-Lanka, and Sudan.

In Ethiopia alone, 1.4 million food-insecure people were reached through these contributions.

WFP facilitated twinning arrangements by matching in-kind and cash contributions (including from Mexico and Namibia) next to contributions from developed countries, for full cost recovery.

Background

Due to insufficient food production and recurrent food shortages, drought and famine, the Horn of Africa region has been dependent on food assistance for decades. In 2011/12, failed rains, high food and fuel prices and conflict have resulted in a large scale food crisis stretching over four countries and affecting over 10 million people. Humanitarian organizations rapidly scaled up operations to manage the escalating emergency.

The South-South Opportunity

Beyond support from traditional donors, contributions were received from various developing countries to mitigate the effects of the crisis in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. These contributions took the form of in-kind support (food) and cash to cover the costs associated with the transport, distribution, etc.

Triangular Cooperation in action

WFP facilitated twinning arrangements by matching the Southern in-kind contributions with co-financing cash-contributions for full cost-recovery (cost of transport, distributions, overheads, etc.). Not only “traditional donors” provided the required cash for the twinning, but also Southern partners like Mexico and Namibia. In cases where no matching cash-donor could be found, it was possible to bridge cash gaps through an “Emerging Donors Matching Fund (EDMF)”.

Results

How much was contributed?

In-kind contributions (including rice, sugar, fish, beans, meat, sorghum, rice oil, peas, coarse salt, soya and maize), worth over USD 13.9 million were received from countries of the Southern African Development Community (Angola, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia) as well as Cuba, Sri-Lanka, and Sudan.



Source: WFP [<https://www.wfp.org/crisis/horn-of-africa>]



Support from the South African Development Community to Somalia [Source: <https://www.wfp.org/crisis/horn-of-africa>].

How many people were reached?

In Ethiopia alone, 1.4 million food insecure people were reached through the twinning arrangements in 2011/12.

The contributions received during the crisis increased the resources available to WFP and helped to assist the affected populations for a longer period of time.

Since most of the in-kind support consisted in rice, WFP was able to distribute the rice in refugee camps where it was the preferred commodity. Other foods (e.g. wheat and maize) was allocated to different refugee camps in which the refugee population preferred these commodities.

In addition, countries like Ethiopia and Kenya provided in-kind support (wheat, beans and rice) to their own populations, equivalent to over 14 million USD.

What can be learned from this case?

- **Importance of quality assurance:** Twinning works if quality assurance and predictable cash flows are in place.
- **Strengthening response mechanisms:** Twinning arrangements can strengthen the receiving country's economy and ability to respond to food and nutrition challenges, when the country experiences a food crisis.
- **Synchronization:** The timing and coordination of the contributions (in-kind and cash for cost recovery) play an important role for successful twinning.
- **Cost effectiveness:** Twinning can be a cost effective way of addressing challenges in food security and nutrition, building on Southern contributions, which do not always have to come in monetary form. For any cash-dollar invested, the US dollar value of in-kind contributions is usually higher.

Who we are

The World Food Programme is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger worldwide.

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