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|  | **Project Completion Report**  **Reporting Period: January 2016 - February 2017** | C:\Documents and Settings\eric.opoku\My Documents\My Pictures\UNDP\UNDP LOGO.jpg Empowered life Resilient nations |

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| **Project Title:** | Support to Lesotho`s Drought Emergency Response: Coordination and Development of an Early Recovery and Resilience Framework. |
| **UNDAF Outcome(s):** | UNDAF Outcome 6: By 2017 Lesotho adopts environmental management practices that promote a low-carbon climate-resilient economy and society, sustainably manages natural resources and reduces vulnerability to disasters. |
| **Expected CP Outcome(s):** | CPD Outcome 2: By 2017 Lesotho adopts environmental management practices that promote a low-carbon climate-resilient economy and society, sustainably manages natural resources and reduces vulnerability to disasters |
| **Expected Output(s):** | Output 1: Strengthened Coordination for Drought Emergency Response and Information Management  Output 2: Early Recovery Needs identified and evidence-based decision making in the humanitarian response in Lesotho supported.  Output 3: Long-term Drought Recovery and Resilience Framework Developed |
| **Executing Entity:** | UNDP |
| **Implementing Agencies:** | UN RCO, OCHA, UNDRMT, DMA |

1. **Background:**

The impact of El Niño induced drought during the 2015/2016 planting season (Sep-Dec) had enormous repercussions in Lesotho and neighboring areas of South Africa, adding to the dry spell registered during the 2014/2015 agricultural season. Lesotho was faced with water scarcity and rain deficits which led to delays or failure of the planting season and certainly caused a sharp decline in food production. Water shortages in Lesotho do not only affect agricultural activities but also industrial production, access to basic services that were unable to function normally (e.g. health centers and schools) as well as household consumption patterns. The water scarcity severely endangered water reserves in Lesotho’s dams and led to water rationing in many districts. A multi-dimensional analysis was carried out and identified a total of 534,802 people at risk in Lesotho until June 2016. The analysis of situation then also showed a strong evidence that the severity of the situation was likely to surpass the 2012 crisis when 725, 000 people, roughly half the rural population were food insecure.

In response to the current El Nino related drought, the United Nations and other development partners supported the Government of Lesotho with development and implementation of the National Drought Response Plan. UNDP further initiated a project “Support to the Government of Lesotho`s Emergency Response to Drought Emergency: Response Coordination and Development of an Early Recovery Framework” also aimed at supporting implementation of Drought Response plan and supporting Lesotho to prepare for future impacts. The project was funded by UNDP Crisis Response Unit through TRAC 1.1.3 resources. Under this project and under the Output 1 - Support national and UN internal coordination mechanisms and strengthening of end to end communication and information sharing with UN agencies, UN OCHA, donors, development partners and the Government of Lesotho – it was proposed to outsource a Humanitarian Affairs Officer to support implementation of the project key results.

In the early stages of the drought response, three critical areas identified for UN the support were as follows:

* Coordination amongst UN agencies as well as with the Disaster Management Authority (DMA) in the drought response
* Assessments to inform the government and the UN response and
* Capacity building in terms of early recovery and resilience building to lower the exposure of the people of Lesotho to further natural hazards.

The project focused on supporting these three critical areas to strengthen the humanitarian response.

1. **Overview of Key Achievements:**

UNDP through RCO was able to support and strengthen coordination mechanisms and communication among key stakeholders in Lesotho including Humanitarian Country Team, within UN system in Lesotho, at regional level and among development partners of GoL. As a result, UN together with Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) was able to raise about US$40.7 million, which was around 70% of estimated requirement for implementation of Drought Response Plan. Again, UN in collaboration with DFID developed a US$ 6.3 million humanitarian joint programme in Lesotho, which is currently ongoing. UNDP also in partnership with UN system and HCT supported advocacy work that led to GoL embracing a paradigm shift from humanitarian response to resilience building in order to achieve sustainable development. As a result, GoL is currently finalizing its National Resilience Strategic Framework document.

1. **Results Achieved as per Planned Activities and Indicators:**

| **Results/Outputs** | **Indicators** | **Target (s)** | **Results Achieved/Progress against Indicator** | **Challenges (state difficulties encountered in implementing activities)** |
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| 1. **Support national and UN internal coordination mechanisms and strengthening of end to end communication and information sharing with UN agencies, UN OCHA, donors, development partners and the Government of Lesotho.** | Established functional coordination mechanism, Regular UN and/HCT coordination meetings, | Strengthened coordination through UNCT, HCT and UNDRMT.  Effective coordination, information dissemination. | * UN system in Lesotho resuscitated and strengthened coordination and information sharing mechanisms during drought emergency response. This included facilitating coordination and secretariat support to HCT meetings, facilitating UN internal coordination and facilitating high level meetings between Government and development partners. * In collaboration with OCHA supported establishment of Emergency Operations Centre in Lesotho. * Supported the regional coordination with UN OCHA through facilitation of Lesotho`s participation in two regional workshops and the organization of five missions by UN OCHA to Lesotho including a preparedness mission, a gender in humanitarian response mission and various missions by Humanitarian Affairs Officers and Information Management Officers to strengthen the response. * Facilitated drafting of the contribution for Lesotho to the RIASCO Action Plan and coordinated the inputs by HCT partners to the regional resilience agenda and also provided the updates and reports on the progress against the targets in the RIASCO action plan including regular updates to the OCHA ROSEA office and the Head of the Southern Africa Office in Johannesburg on developments in Lesotho. * Prepared advocacy and information material for the RC and other Heads of Agencies for regional meetings. This includes five (5) humanitarian situation updates produced as well as various briefs and papers on humanitarian matters for donors, HCT partners and the Government of Lesotho | Following snap-elections of 2015, political situation in Lesotho has never been conducive for implementation of any developmental and emergency work as result of lack of political will, slow decision-making. |
| **2. Early Recovery Needs identified and evidence-based decision making in the humanitarian response in Lesotho supported**. | Assessment reports, Deployment of DRM expert, 2 times | At least 2 assessments include ER dimension (Food and Crop assessments) | * Supported Drought Rapid Assessment in January 2016 and Vulnerability Assessment in May 2016 aimed at identifying needs that had to be addressed during the emergency and to ensure a smooth transition from relief, recovery and development during implementation of Drought Response Plan. | Slow decision-making as mentioned above led to challenges of timely allocation and access of Government resources needed for data collection. |
| **3. Support development of Long-term Drought Recovery plan and Resilience Framework** | Early Recovery (ER) plan and Resilience Framework, Gender-sensitive mainstreaming guidelines | At least one national ER plan in place,  Gender-sensitive mainstreaming guidelines developed, At least one donor round table meeting held. | * As part of advocacy to ensure that the GoL embraces a paradigm shift from humanitarian response to resilience building as a driver towards sustainable development, UNDP facilitated a meeting with senior government officials in Prime Minister`s Office, and that meeting endorsed and initiated development of a National Resilience Strategy Framework document. * Supported development of a National Resilience Strategy Framework document. * Served as a CERF secretariat to support drafting of CERF application and coordinated implementation of the CERF projects by UN agencies including support to the delivery in case of challenges. * In collaboration with DFID and UN agencies, supported design, drafting and coordinate implementation of a humanitarian joint programme for Lesotho (US $6.3 million) including facilitating regular monitoring and reporting to DFID. * Facilitated and supported UN agencies and HCT partners in humanitarian fund raising efforts, which resulted in about US $40.7million recurred for the response. * Currently, supporting management of a humanitarian coordination project for the RCO worth more than US $146,385. | Drought humanitarian crisis provided an opportunity to reflect on a need for resilience building for future impacts. However, this is still a new concept which requires collective efforts by all key stakeholders and is a transformative process which requires inclusive governance and political will, which are currently serious challenge in Lesotho |

1. **Challenges and Lessons Learnt:**

UN system together with other development partners managed to mobilize a large part of resources required for implementation of emergency response. However, due to slow decision making, most of Government resources pledged for the response were not allocated on time and targeting of affected population did not run smoothly due to lack of political will. Again, the fact that Government didn’t have budget allocation for such emergencies and had to reallocate resources from ministries` budgets, this led to delayed implementation of the response. The 2016 drought provided GoL an opportunity to reflect on a need for resilience building and as a result Government initiated a process of developing a National Resilience Strategy Framework. However, due to slow decision making, this process took more than it was expected.

1. **Conclusion:**

TRAC 1.1.3 funding was a significant contribution by UNDP in supporting GoL to response to unprecedented drought that caused humanitarian crisis and left more than 25% of total population affected. The funding enabled UNDP through RCO to resuscitate and strengthen coordination and information sharing mechanisms that played a critical role during implementation of drought response. This strengthened capacity will also enabled the country to response better to future impacts as Lesotho is not self-sufficient in crop production and as a result there is always challenge of a significant number of population facing food insecurity after each cropping season even during normal rainfall seasons. This challenge calls for a need for building resilience intervention and through this support, UNDP was able to support GoL to develop a National Resilience Strategy Framework.