This report was commissioned by Action Against Hunger | ACF International. The comments contained herein reflect the opinions of the Evaluators only.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ACF’s response to the Horn of Africa crisis in 2011 has contributed to reduce the impact of the crisis on the lives and livelihoods of the population. However, such response was only substantially scaled up once the humanitarian emergency was set and a famine declared in Southern and Central Somalia.

ACF seems to be less able to trigger an early and appropriate response in the challenging context of a slow onset emergency than in sudden crisis emergencies. In the Horn of Africa, ACF was not a relevant humanitarian actor in preparedness during 2010 and early 2011 and could definitely respond more effectively and earlier in a phase of acute food and livelihood crisis.

Few emergency activities were initiated before July 2011. After July, when the crisis was already widely present in the media, ACF implemented larger scale emergency projects in the areas of nutrition, WaSH and FSL. The response was coherent to the needs of the affected populations, fairly well coordinated with other stakeholders and, in general, appropriately implemented. Context constraints have limited the access, coverage and timeliness of the ACF response mostly in Somalia, where ACF was operating with difficulty well before 2011, but with a low profile.

Early warning information from external sources was widely available and ACF was able to generate highly valuable context information of its own. Nevertheless more systematic analysis of early warning data is possible and desirable.

Preparedness and emergency planning is still a challenging issue for ACF missions in the region of the Horn of Africa.

ACF International has largely improved coordination between HQs (operational and support), increasing the resource sharing and performing better at all levels. The Emergency Management System responds to the institutional needs, even if there are a few aspects to be improved regarding communication and coordination between HQs. The fact of having 2 operational HQs involved has reinforced and accelerated the implementation of such common Emergency Response protocols.

The existing ACF regional structures had a very limited role in the emergency response coordination and the exchanges between ACF in the four countries have been almost non-existent.

Both initiative and autonomy of the ACF in-country teams in the region deserves development and further thinking. As is usual, in this occasion, institutional needs may not always match humanitarian priorities perceived at field level and this coexists with a high level of pressure within the network. This situation has created stress, and some institutional inconsistencies that risk being transmitted to beneficiaries, communities, donors and other stakeholders.

ACF has not yet developed a comprehensive regional Disaster Risk Management (DRM) approach, adapted to drought and conflict prone area, and only ACF-Ethiopia had in place any DRM programming before the 2011 emergency.

This emergency response has been more complex and there have been interesting advances, but there are also many recommendations from the previous emergency evaluations (Pakistan and Haiti) that have not yet been taken forward.

The speed of deployment and adequacy of human resources was satisfactory, and regarding the emergency pool even remarkable, but there were still important gaps in key positions. The coverage of additional support profiles has improved compared to past emergencies.
Taking into account the complexity of the operation in the Horn of Africa, a multi-country emergency with different HQs involved, the coordination and management of the communication component was more than satisfactory. Public opinion has been informed in a timely manner by a diverse palette of communication channels with no negative side effect for the missions.

Administration and logistics systems performed properly in most cases. Despite some failures in the administrative control or in logistics decisions, generally the programmes were well supported for its implementation. On the other hand, the deployment of the Emergency Pools, which was one of the strongest parts of the response, was not always supported by additional administrative personnel.

Funds were raised on time and resource availability was in general ahead of the capacity of implementation. However, advance of private funds and bridge funds (on expected public contracts) should improve in order to ensure a proper and timelier response, above all in ACF-USA missions. Communication and transparency between ACF HQ regarding funds availability and allocation have also improved but further improvement should still be an institutional priority.

Recommendations

Early warning systems have worked in the Horn of Africa in 2010 and 2011. The limitations arise when linking them with an early response. In the drought-prone countries of the Horn of Africa ACF needs to reinforce their early response capacities through (1) proactively providing input to regional early warning systems, i.e. on nutrition indicators taking into account the expertise of ACF (2) devoting resources to the analysis of the early warning information and (3) linking to locally designed early responses (contingency planning) with clear triggers within a regional DRM strategy.

ACF International must continue its efforts to develop and disseminate the Emergency Management System, which provides a log frame for integrated response among all ACF members. HQ departments should create the necessary tools for a proper implementation making sure that the system is known by all the missions. ACF must ensure that there are focal persons able to take decisions at any time, which would overcome gaps or leave of key personnel and that there is fluid communication between HQs’ departments. ACF in the Horn of Africa and elsewhere should have an Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan (EPRP) at country level and when appropriate at regional level. Currently Paris and Madrid Emergency Pools are leading the development and dissemination of the comprehensive ERPP toolkit. Both policy documents are useful tools, but still very little is in place in the missions of the Horn of Africa visited by the evaluation team. Efforts and resources need to be allocated to put those plans in motion. All the teams should be sensitized on the overall ACF Emergency Management System and trained to understand and participate on the EPRP. In that frame, information on ACF resources (HR, stocks, etc.) should be updated and shared between countries on a regular basis.

Medium and long cycle programmes in disaster-prone countries need to be designed with a Switchboard to Emergency Response (or crisis modifier) to preposition specific project resources to ER and pre-identifying activities to be switched in order to address preparedness (in slow-onset crisis) or emergency response in case of disaster.

ACF country teams should be empowered in order to proactively promote and decide on preparedness and response to emergencies. At the same time, support HQs may need to adapt to confer power to the missions, avoiding more intrusions than existing with the managing HQ.

ACF might explore the possibility to create an ACF regional coordination structure for the Horn of Africa dealing with regional issues like early warning, support to country EPRP, communication & advocacy, etc. For instance, the refugees’ crisis in 2011 had an evident regional dimension that could be better analysed.

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1Available on http://www.missions-acf.org/kitemergency/HTML_STATIC/homepageEN.html
from a regional perspective. From a technical point of view, a regular technical exchange at regional level is encouraged.

ACF needs still to work out its linking relief and development strategies, by participating on consultation forums, encouraging participation of beneficiaries and partners at all levels of the program cycle and promoting accountability. Medium and long term donors are yet to be explored in the region.

A reinforced accountability system and analyses that include “do-no-harm” principle towards communities and beneficiaries should be developed. Formal feedback system should apply from the needs assessment phase to ER implementation and the exit strategy and even more wherever rehabilitation / development approach is desired. Information to beneficiaries on ACF ER strategy should be reinforced not only for accountability but also for monitoring/control purposes.

In the missions of the Horn of Africa, ACF would benefit from reinforcing its culture and resources for monitoring, evaluation & learning at country level to promote capitalisation of information and experience. This is especially important when the Remote Management approach is in place. Remote Management protocols in Somalia must be revised and reinforced, mainly through accurate monitoring indicators and a triangulation system.

ACF need to allocate the necessary efforts and resources to define its Advocacy strategy in every country of the Horn of Africa. ACF shall aspire to influence donors, national public policy makers and public opinion. There seem to be a negative perception on advocacy from many ACF staff, while ACF, as any other humanitarian actor, can and should influence positively on policies and must communicate on the root causes of humanitarian crisis. Advocacy is on the agenda for ACF International and ACF teams need to be provided with the tools and an understanding of implementation strategies.

The two Emergency Pools based in Madrid and Paris have played a major role supporting the countries involved in the Horn of Africa crisis and this effort should be properly accompanied through other support staff, since the burden on administrators and HR managers could hinder and slow down the response. ACF need to consider improving the conditions of service of its national senior staff (contract duration, salary scale, benefit package), above all when there is medium or long term strategy in the country and especially where capitalisation and experience are critical.

The ACF Regional Training Centre has been an interesting step forward in support to ACF in-country teams in the Horn of Africa and it could provide even more opportunities. It is recommended to explore other services as technical and career support or assisting the missions to carry out individual need assessments. ACF must ensure that during the first stages or peaks of the emergency response there are no gaps of key staff and by using resources available sufficiently. Including not only the Emergency Pools but also rosters from operational and support HQ. It is again recommended that ACF field teams in complex emergencies (refugees/IDP camps, insecurity contexts, etc.) have appropriate experience on similar context and are familiar with ACF systems.

When putting into practice the principles and steps of the Emergency Appeal System as part of the Emergency Response Standard Operating Protocol, more attention has to be given on defining the short-term strategy of the response decided by the managing HQ and to the resources requested from each support HQ for a given period (i.e. 3 to 6 months). At the same time, support HQs need to establish better mechanisms for regular communication on the funds raised, above all on private and non-restricted funds in order to ensure absolute transparency and better decide the allocation of resources. ACF should explore an intranet system where in real-time any HQ may consult the support available from the entire network.

In particular, in the volatile context in which the ACF-Somalia mission operates, ACF should keep reassessing their relationship with UN agencies and clusters in a context where the UN is not perceived
at all neutral by all the actors in the country. Maintaining such relations has reduced added value and may also jeopardize the principle of access.

Whilst taking into account that the communication coverage of the crisis through ACF press officers has reinforced ACF International’s positioning and presence in the media, it is recommended to ensure the integration of the communication team in the ACF country team, having one leader to channel the requests to ACF field teams and sharing the information with the other Communications Officers. Job descriptions of managing and support Press Officers could be revised accordingly.

ACF has been increasing the use of testimonies and first person case studies for communications purposes and we encourage reinforcing this beneficiary and community based communication to public opinion and decision makers. Communities and final beneficiaries should be more involved at all stages (accountability and communication) of the response.

ACF International should revise its guidelines for beneficiary counting, establishing the necessary criteria to making sure that there is no double counting, that direct and indirect beneficiaries are properly distinguished or even that not all recipients benefited in the same way and intensity.

ACF should capitalise the lessons learned and the recommendations coming from ER Evaluations (Niger, Haiti, Pakistan, and Horn of Africa).

ACF funding capacity through public, private and own funds is increasing, and so is the capacity to fund advances (bridge funds) as happened well in most cases. ACF-USA should also ensure the advance of enough funds to life-saving programmes, assuming more financial risks if necessary. This is even more important when opening new bases that incur high start-up costs (West Pokot and Dadaab).

The remote management approach could also benefit from community-based monitoring using more systematic feedback systems. ACF should keep exploring the use of new communication technologies for distant monitoring in such contexts and where the beneficiaries themselves are not endangered.

ACF seems to be a natural partner to work in Djibouti. Cultural links, the absence of operating partners, and the added value of being present on all the rest countries of the Horn can bring unexpected opportunities for ACF. Nevertheless, to ensure that ACF presence is meaningful, the organization needs to carefully revise its current approach in line with the country strategy.
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to give thanks to all ACF staff that provided their time and participated in this evaluation, sharing with us their professional experiences. Also we thank many other people from communities, organizations and governmental institutions that wanted to express their thoughts and opinions and that contributed to develop a more complete overview of the humanitarian emergency in the Horn of Africa and ACF response.

All the work done would have been impossible without the thorough support from Ben Allen, whose constant care and ability to organise documents, schedules and other information have facilitated enormously our task.

AMP & MRB

May 2012

Cover Photograph: Herders and their flock at a water pan (part of ACF’s DRM programme with the Arid-Lands Consortium) in Duse, Garbatulla District, Kenya, 28th March 2012.
LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACF  Action Contre la Faim
ACFIN  Action Contre la Faim International
ARRA  Administration for Returnees and Refugee Affairs
ASAL  Arid and Semiarid Lands
CD  Country Director
CERF  United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund
CIFF  Children Investment Fund Foundation
DRC  Danish Refugee Council
DRM  Disaster Risk Management
ECHO  European Commission Humanitarian office
ELA  Evaluation, Learning and Accountability
EMS  Emergency Management System
EPRP  Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan
EWS  Early Warning System
FAO  Food and Agriculture Organization
FEWSNET  Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FSL  Food Security and Livelihoods
FSNU  Food Security and Nutrition Analysis System
GAM  Global Acute Malnutrition
GoE  Government of Ethiopia
GoK  Government of Kenya
HoA  Horn of Africa
HRF  Humanitarian Response Fund
IHL  International Humanitarian Law
INGOs  International Non Governmental Organization
IPC  Integrated food security Phase Classification
IRC  International Rescue Committee
MSF  Medicines sans Frontières
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OCHA</td>
<td>Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFU</td>
<td>Procurement Follow Up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMART</td>
<td>Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNNPR</td>
<td>South Nations, Nationalities and People’s Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNRS</td>
<td>Somali National Regional State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWOT</td>
<td>Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ToR</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commission for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WaSH</td>
<td>Water and Sanitation and Hygiene</td>
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<tr>
<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Program</td>
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</table>
INTERNETION

The 2011 crisis in the Horn of Africa directly affected up to 13 million people by causing critical food insecurity or famine in four different countries (Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti). In Somalia, a 20-year war as underlying cause and the effects of drought have brought famine to most of the population in Central and Southern Somalia, following UN declarations. In Kenya and Ethiopia the failure of two consecutive rainy seasons compounded with the stress on households due to inflation of food prices and a period of successive poor years (2006-2010) has resulted in acute food insecurity for millions of people, above all pastoralists in arid and semi-arid regions, coupled with the burden of receiving thousands of refugees from Somalia in an already stressed host population. Djibouti has been going through a series of consecutive years of rainfall deficit and the drought related humanitarian context has been characterized by worsening food insecurity which culminated in the 2010-2011 drought disaster. The drought combined with the 2008 global food prices led many destitute rural households to migrate within the region and principally, towards the capital, Djibouti Ville. In addition, increasingly amount of refugees from Somalia, Ethiopia and Yemen, hosted in camps were highly food insecure.

Levels of global acute malnutrition (GAM) in children under-5 above 35% - more than double the emergency threshold - were recorded in several locations in Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia by mid-2011. Other consequences were displacement, loss of assets and undermined income-generating capacity. New arrivals at Somali refugee camps in Dollo Ado (Ethiopia) reached 45% GAM based on screenings in July 2011.

ACF International has actively contributed to relief the population in four affected countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Djibouti), through programmes in Nutrition, Water Sanitation & Hygiene (WaSH)

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2 CAP Djibouti 2012
3 26,000 as per the official figures by the end of 2011
and Food Security implemented from 10 operational bases and benefiting 880,000 people. Two managing HQs were in charge of the operations and three other HQs mobilized resources in their support. As any slow-on-set crisis, it is difficult to determine the start of the crisis and we could even say that the response is still ongoing. The worst phase of the emergency was the period from June to October 2011.

In an effort to better respond to humanitarian crisis in a coordinated manner, the Evaluations, Learning, & Accountability (ELA) Unit in ACF-UK manages the Emergency Response (ER) Learning Project that is contributing to analyse how ACF International is progressing on emergency response. The initiative is in line with the ACF International Emergency Response Standard Operating Protocol that proposes external evaluations after major emergencies for learning purposes. ACF’s emergency responses to the Asian Tsunami (2004) and Haiti Earthquake (2010) provided the baseline of the ER Learning Project. In 2011 another external evaluation was carried out after the Pakistan Floods (2011). The current evaluation will further contribute to this learning process with learning from a slow-onset emergency situation and so further expanding the evidence base which the ER Learning Project seeks to

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4 Following ACF data.

5 The Emergency Response Learning Project (managed by the ELA Unit, ACF-UK) is an on-going process that is designed to assist ACF International in the development of timelier, more appropriate and more effective responses to the humanitarian emergencies of today. The project is founded on the belief that the key to more successful emergency responses lies in ACF’s capacity to critically evaluate its standard operating procedures during emergencies. The aim of the project is to identify lessons learned from rapid-onset emergencies, and to facilitate their integration into future ACF responses. In doing so, the project aims to contribute to ACF’s preparedness efforts, and to provide a framework for future evaluations that ensures coherent and consistent learning in the organisation.

6 Hereafter referred either to ACF.
compile in order to better respond to all emergencies in a coordinated manner and from a regional (HoA) perspective.
EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF ACF INTERNATIONAL’S RESPONSE TO THE HORN OF AFRICA CRISIS

METHODODOLOGY

It was decided in coordination with the ELA Unit of ACF-UK, to share the field work between the two external consultants, one visiting Ethiopia and Djibouti and the other focussing on Kenya and Somalia (without field visit into Somalia). Ben Allen, from the ELA Unit supported the work of the evaluators during the field work and visited Kenya and Djibouti. The evaluation team prioritised a participative approach, engaging not only ACF staff at all levels (HQ, capitals, bases), but as well beneficiaries, local institutions, several key donors, UN agencies or other NGOs working in the affected area.

A briefing in ACF-France HQ in Paris and with ACF-USA through phone/videoconference took place at the beginning of the consultancy and afterwards in every mission capital - Addis Ababa, Nairobi for both ACF Somalia and ACF-Kenya and Djibouti.

After the briefing phase the evaluation team met in Nairobi on March 17th and 18th in order to work out the methodological framework for the evaluation7. The primary and secondary information sources were agreed, including internal and external stakeholders and documents. At first, semi-structured interviews, document review and analysis, focal groups and SWOT meetings were the main evaluation techniques considered.

For each evaluation question a set of quantitative and qualitative indicators was developed in line with the questions in the Terms of Reference (ToR), followed by the selection of informants and documents which could provide information on the selected indicators. Some analysis tools have been developed in order to obtain quantitative values or rates and qualitative appraisals have been valued through scoring on qualitative scales. Occasionally brief surveys were conducted among ACF staff through questionnaires making for a better qualitative appraisal.

The evaluation report is structured according to the ToR and is therefore split into two sections; Overall Emergency Response and Systems. Further breakdown of each section and the rationale for this breakdown can be found in Annex 1 (ToR).

All findings and support information were cross-checked as much as possible between the two external consultants. Once the field work was completed the evaluation team met again in Nairobi from the 7th to 10th April in order to agree and summarize information, findings and conclusions keeping a regional overview but without missing relevant specificities when these have been recognized. Also a set of recommendations were agreed at that moment, some of which were assessed with the country directors present in Nairobi (former CD of ACF-Ethiopia and current CD of ACF-Somalia plus the CD of ACF-Kenya).

The evaluation team sought to cover all key aspects and touched major dimensions of the response, listened to the views of a variety of stakeholders, and reviewed documentation from within and outside of ACF. The 2 main challenges and constraints to the evaluation were the lack of access to the field in Somalia and the difficulty in accessing documentation from the Ethiopia mission.

Between the 11th and the 24th April the evaluation team worked on the writing of the preliminary report to be sent to ACF for analysis and feedback before the final version is prepared. This participative process was coupled with a debriefing at Paris HQ (3rd May) which gave HQ staff (from Paris, NYC, Madrid and London) another opportunity to feedback on the findings and to influence the final report.

7 See Annex 2.
THE CONTEXT

From late 2010 there was information available on weather and food security forecasts in the Horn of Africa region through government services and the Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWSNET). Early forecast warning on potential food insecurity was recurrent over the past few years and a first Food Security Alert was issued on 31st January 2011, following the “extremely poor performance of the October to December Deyr (short rains) in the eastern Horn of Africa [that] led to crop failure in the marginal agricultural areas and rapid depletion of water, graze, and browse in pastoral areas.”

This alert highlighted extreme food insecure areas in South Central Somalia and Northern Kenya between January and March 2011. The report also warned that if Gu (March-May) rains are significantly below normal “a major crisis, similar in severity to 2005/06, but covering a larger area would be likely.”

On 23rd February 2011 a new Food Security alert was issued by FEWSNET, FAO, FSNAU and the government of Kenya, after the January/February harvests were reported poor and food prices were nearly 40% the previous year’s average. It was estimated 5 million people “will have difficulty meeting basic food and water requirements for survival over the coming months”. The document stressed the need for emergency assistance and contingency planning was also encouraged.

In the worst case scenario (Gu rainfall substantially below-average) a “total crop failure and massive livestock mortality would occur and food insecurity would become extreme across much of the region”. FSNAU, by that time, reported on increasing malnutrition (25 % GAM) in Southern and Central Somalia.

In many parts of the region the awaited rains were drastically below normal. In April most of the pastoral areas were severely stressed and livestock started to die due to the lack of graze. On the 30th May 2011 the Government of Kenya declared the effects of the drought a national disaster.

In early July FEWSNET stated that “about 11 million people in the eastern Horn cannot access food and are unable to meet basic survival needs, and emergency levels of acute malnutrition are widespread”.

Livestock mortality in excess of 15-30 % had been reported throughout the region, with average levels as high as 40-60 % in localized areas, especially for cattle and sheep. In southern Somalia, red sorghum prices had risen up to 240 % over the year 2010. The combination of extremely high food prices and average to below-average livestock prices and wages had substantially eroded purchasing power in pastoral, cropping, and urban areas.

8 The evaluation team met during the field visits herders reporting up to 95 % of losses.
Finally, on the 17th July 2011, the United Nations declared the famine in two areas of Southern Somalia (the Bakool agro-pastoral livelihood zone and all areas of Lower Shabelle) and a humanitarian emergency across all other regions of the South. An alert was also raised that famine was expected to spread across all regions of the south in the next 1-2 months. Other regions in Kenya and Ethiopia were in a state of humanitarian emergency.

“I had 120 cows and more than 300 goats and sheep, but due to the drought my animals started to die in April 2011. In October it started to rain, but I could save only 20 goats and 3 cows. This is all I have now.”

Halake Kini, a herder in Duse (Northern Kenya). March 2012
A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE RESPONSE

The international community reacted through several humanitarian UN agencies, international NGOs and donor mobilization. Overall, there has been a substantial response to the crisis in Horn of Africa. As a guide, the requirements\(^9\), estimated to be around 2.5 billion USD in 2011 have been covered by up to 82%.

**Figure 2**

Funding Status 2011 Horn of Africa Drought

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Funding Status 2011 Horn of Africa Drought</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>updated requirements (US$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya EHRP</td>
<td>1,200,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djibouti Drought Appeal</td>
<td>1,000,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somalia CAP</td>
<td>800,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia Humanitarian Requirements, July-December 2011*</td>
<td>600,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia refugee-related requirements</td>
<td>400,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACF International, as other humanitarian actors, contributed to the response first in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia and later on in Djibouti.

**Kenya**

Crop failure, livestock mortality and the high prices of local cereals coupled with the conflict in neighbouring Somalia deteriorated food security in Kenya. The influx of refugees rapidly aggravated this emergency situation. The Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG) 2011 Long Rains Season Food Security Assessment estimated that 3.75 million people in the pastoralist and marginal cropping areas of Kenya were affected by the crisis. Following the FEWSNET alert on September 19\(^{th}\), 1.4 million pastoralists were stated to be the most vulnerable in the north and north-eastern districts of Wajir, Turkana, Isiolo, Mandera, Marsabit, and Garissa. Weakened coping mechanisms and insecurity prevented better and more effective internal assistance.

When the Government of Kenya (GoK) declared the drought a national disaster after the failure of March-May rains, the Inter-Agency community and the major international NGOs took action. The UN tried to mobilize the CERF\(^{10}\) rapid response facility and requested 741 million USD in July 2011.

ACF-Kenya was already scaling-up their nutrition programmes and adapting other running projects to respond locally to more acute needs from 3 operational bases. Later on between September and October 2011 another 2 bases were opened to expand the ACF response.

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\(^9\) Funding Status 2011 Horn of Africa Drought according to the Financial Tracking Service (FTS).

\(^{10}\) United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund
Ethiopia

The humanitarian situation in Ethiopia in 2011 was complex: the country was experiencing the effects of the long announced La Niña climatic episode in the Eastern Pacific, leading to insufficient and delayed rains, high fuel and food prices and deteriorating terms of trade for pastoralist. This created a critical situation of food insecurity, water shortages and household stress, particularly in the south and east of the country (Oromia, SNNPR and Somali regions). At that time, neighbouring Somalia was experiencing a similar situation. This situation coupled with the effects of armed conflict, blockages of markets and humanitarian access in Southern Somalia, triggered a massive influx of people from these regions into Dollo Ado and Gode districts in Ethiopia.

In contrast to Kenya, the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) did not declare a national emergency but raised the figure of population needing relief aid from 2.3 million in February 2011 to 4.7 in July. ACF, in Ethiopia for the last 25 years, was fairly well positioned to respond to the La Niña induced drought, with some DRM programming already in place (Borena) and mitigation operations in the Somali region (from February 2011 in Kebri Dehar) and SNNPR (Awasa base). However, organizations in general were not well prepared to react to the refuge crisis.

In July, the opening of a new ACF base in Dollo Ado refugee camp was made possible by the combined efforts of the Emergency Pool and Paris HQ and the in country team’s lead negotiations with ARRA, the refugee’s affairs agency of the GoE.

Although a functioning early warning system is in place in Ethiopia, it does not necessarily link with an early response unless agencies are proactive on locally negotiating funds for preparedness beforehand. The strong dependency on the government declarations for humanitarian requirements- mainly linked with food aid- is pointed out by some as contributing factor that delayed the start of the response. An outcome of the refugee crisis can be found in the ACF Ethiopia Country strategy (2011) which incorporates refugee affairs and DRM programming in order to better respond to the on-going and changing needs for 2012-2014.

Somalia

The failure of two successive (dehr and gu) rains and therefore harvests, and subsequent loss of income and assets, the steep rise in staple food prices relative to livestock and wage labour, added to the structural crisis in the country. The cumulative effects of conflict, successive droughts, weak livelihoods, were compounded by the recent crop failures

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11 Ethiopia had the second-highest inflation rate in the world last year, when it peaked at 40.6 percent, Capital SC
12 GoE HRD February 2011 and Revised HRD July 2011
13 Southern Nations and Nationalities and Peoples Region
14 With the exception maybe of the refugee ones: IRC, IOM, UNHCR…
15 Administration for Refugees and Returnees Affairs, form the Government of Ethiopia.
But in Somalia the lack of humanitarian access and the fact that very few organisations were working in Al-Shabaab controlled areas\textsuperscript{16} contributed even more to the effects of the crisis. The armed conflict, apart from being a cause to the food crisis, has acutely determined the intensity and coverage of the humanitarian response.

ACF was only present in two different areas, Mogadishu and Wajid (in Bakool region, rural area controlled by Al Shabaab), with limited access and resources working with a remote approach that made any reaction more difficult than normal. With such additional constraints, ACF contributed to the emergency response of the international community after the UN declaration of famine.

**Djibouti**

After the July 2008 global food crisis, ACF prepared an exploratory mission to Djibouti which happened in September 2010. Around March 2011, the mission was opened and started to be operative in July. The opening of the Djibouti mission was a long meditated strategy.

In 2011, the degradation of the general conditions and increasing levels of poverty in the country, already assessed on 2008-2009, was announced. The rising refugee influx, extreme heat and lack of rains exacerbated throughout 2011, created a situation of increasing admissions rates for children in the nutrition facilities managed by MSF in slums of Djibouti Ville, notably Balbala area.

ACF began their response by addressing the chronic needs of nutrition and water with an emergency approach. The functioning and challenges observed in the Djibouti response corresponds more to the natural complications of a brand new mission in a very particular environment than to the typical emergency context found in the rest of the Horn of Africa operations.

\textsuperscript{16} For instance, WFP was expelled in early 2010.
FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION

I. Evaluation Criteria I: Overall Emergency Response: Timeliness

1.1. Timeliness of the response in each area of operation/activity

The timeliness of ACF’s response to the crisis has been variable, and for the most part relief efforts arrived only when the humanitarian emergency was declared at country or regional level. Few preparedness activities were implemented in order to reduce the further impact of the drought. One of the earliest responses was the emergency water distribution in Kebr Dehar, SNRS, in February 2011, and some mitigation activities through the DRM program in Borena. Water trucking activities were also carried out in Somalia during the Gu failed rainy season and in Kenya from July 2011.

In Kenya, in areas where ACF was already working the adaptation of on-going programmes and the scaling-up of nutrition activities contributed to assist the population from May or June, but with very few additional resources, since by that time no new important project proposals were successfully submitted nor own funds yet allocated. The reinforcement of supplementary and therapeutic feeding programmes arrived only after the governments or United Nations declared the catastrophic effects of the drought and international appeals were launched by UN agencies and iNGOs. In both Kenya and Ethiopia, ACF started slaughter destocking in August 2011.

Somalia is a complex and different case for a variety of reasons. The information available is scarce, based only on FSNAU. The low access to victims due to security and political constraints makes a proper context analysis and relief aid operations more difficult. ACF was only able to carry out its own need assessments in a circle of 45 km out of Wajid (Bakool) and accessible parts of Mogadishu. Nevertheless, even the Humanitarian Country Team did not seem to consider the information available reliable until the crisis peaked in June and July 2011. Most of the humanitarian organisations followed and joined the overall effort only after the declaration of famine announced by UN. Though negotiations with local authorities were initiated ACF could not succeed in exploring and deploying in new areas in order to enlarge the geographical coverage.

In the cases of deployment in new intervention areas in countries where ACF was already present, it took several weeks to few months to become operational. For a number of reasons some bases were only operational from late 2011 or even January 2012. The Djibouti mission started in March 2011 and became operational in June 2011.

ACF has not developed a sound system for early warning information analysis to enable an early and appropriate response and to promote a relief strategy afterwards, when an emergency is declared. There is evidence that ACF had enough quantitative and qualitative information to take more consistent decisions, even if the information was limited and the geographical scope was reduced. After the first signs of rain failure in late 2010, if a DRM approach was in place, preparedness activities could have been launched and at the same time a contingency plan set up at national or regional level. From mid-April, with information available on last crop production and current rainfall and biomass production in pastoral areas, together with other early warning indicators easily available from ACF operational bases (livestock mortality rates, population

17 Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit - Somalia
18 Formerly known as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee before 2011
movements, staple food prices, ratio of livestock/cereal value, etc.), there was enough information to scale-up running programmes and even identify projects in new areas.19

2. Evaluation Criteria 2: Overall Emergency Response: Coherence

2.1. Coherence of the strategy for the response

Coherence with other humanitarian interventions

ACF coordinated with other humanitarian actors involved in the response. At national level ACF participated in several inter-agency coordination forums, such as the UN Nutrition Clusters in Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti (the initial stages) and Somalia20, the Nutritional Technical Forum (Kenya) and the NGO Consortium (Somalia). In the nutrition sector and where appropriate, ACF had a regular presence and its opinions were considered. In other UN clusters, INGO forums, task forces or partnership meetings in capital cities, ACF was less consistently represented, in some cases (i.e. Addis Abeba) due to the lack of enough senior staff to be allocated to all those meetings.

At region and local level, ACF become a more active member of humanitarian teams21, keeping also high coherence with emergency responses from governmental organizations and other NGOs. In Kenya and Ethiopia, ACF had a lead role in the district or county coordination forums. In Somalia, there was also good coordination related to geographical coverage in Southern and Central Somalia and other organizations were relying on ACF’s presence in Bakool up to late November 2011.22 The coherence of ACF interventions with those implemented by other stakeholders was ensured through these regular coordination meetings. There was sharing of needs assessments, context analysis and ACF has been active in sharing the results of their own nutritional surveys, especially SMART data, contributing to the humanitarian communities understanding of the crisis.

Harmonization with other agencies regarding technical aspects or protocols, targeting of beneficiaries and selection criteria was adequate. This was generally coordinated through consortiums (e.g. The Cash Consortium in Somalia and the Arid Land Recovery Consortium in Kenya, or the operational agreement with IRC in Kenya) where minimum operating standards were also shared.

In new deployment areas the entry strategy followed by ACF has been open and transparent, providing clear information to all stakeholders. Particularly in complex contexts like Dadaab and Dollo Ado, ACF has taken advantage of the window of opportunity from partners to enter to work in the camps with due care to coordinate properly with UNHCR and NGOs working in the same sectors (Nutrition, WaSH). Nevertheless, in the case of Dadaab, security constraints, delays in the negotiation with UNHCR, slow recruitment processes and slow installation were obstacles that impeded a proper start of activities before January 2012.

19 There are controversial reports (i.e. “A Dangerous Delay. The cost of late response to early warnings in the 2011 drought in the Horn of Africa”. SCF-Oxfam. January 2012) stating that forecast of the crisis started from August 2010 and were strident in early November 2010.
20 However, from late 2011 ACF-Somalia has scaled down its participation in the Nutrition Cluster/ Working Group for Somalia.
21 ACF’s participation in Djibouti was in the preliminary stages of the cluster
22 ACF’s participation in Djibouti was in the preliminary stages of the cluster
23 INGO forums, diverse task forces’ members, etc.
24 The 28th November 2011 ACF was expelled by Al-Shabaab, together with 15 other organizations.
25 Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions. SMART methodology is an improved survey method to assess the severity of a humanitarian crisis. ACF (Spain and USA) have been major contributors with ACF-Canada being the lead ACF HQ.
In Ethiopia where ACF was implementing DRM programming in late 2010 and 2011 the organization was well and regularly connected with regional task force forums and endorsed decisions made in such meetings.

2.2. Coherence with humanitarian needs

Generally, the choice of response – whether Nutrition, WaSH or Food Security - was consistent with the needs identified, both in areas of new deployment and in areas where ACF was already operational. Though the need assessment and identification methodologies were not completely standardized (see below Criteria 3), we found that ACF has generally coordinated properly with the local population, local institutions and other humanitarian actors present in the same area in order to ensure the best response to the needs.

The majority of ACF funds for the response were allocated to emergency health and nutrition programme, both the classic latest responses of a slow onset food security crisis, while water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WaSH) and in particular food security received marginal investments in the overall response. The use of funds for the response in the region, from June to December 2011, is represented in Figure 3. During 2011, only ACF-Somalia had more relevant investments in Food Security, above all from September/October due to the implementation of food and livelihood activities using DFID funds.

![Figure 3: ACF use of funds in HoA crisis](image)

A main shortfall in the response lies in the preparedness and relief phases of the drought cycle management. Though there were occasional concept papers or emergency projects submitted (i.e. Somalia or Kenya), during the alert alarms (March-April) few preparedness actions were finally initiated or scaled up by that time, when increasing needs were evident in locations with good access and enough available information. The needs were not met in these early stages.

“From May 2011 the price of 20 Kg of maize raised up to 1.500 KES, hardly the price I could get for a big goat. Now for the same quantity of maize I pay 600 KES and I sell my bigger goats at 2.500 KES or more.”

A woman in Takaiwa (North West Kenya). March 2012
In areas where DRM programming was already on place, the opportunity for information sharing and cross learning on the actual situation and risks among ACF and other organizations could have been better utilized. Some discrepancies on programming approach would have been avoided; for example there were 3 different kits for support on slaughter destocking from 3 different organizations, ACF among them, in the same district.

ACF is making an effort to incorporate early warning tools and methodologies at mission level. For instance, in Kenya there is a Surveillance Officer in charge of surveys and systematization of the information. Developing links with emergency preparedness and establishing triggers for decision-making are the main challenges ahead.

After the emergency declaration and during the relief phase ACF carried out needs assessment in new areas, paying attention to the refugees/IDP situation. It is quite clear, at least in the case of Dadaab, that the identification process had more of a top-down decision and that the country teams did not decide by their own initiative on the needs assessment, even if afterwards they decided freely on the appropriateness to open the base. There is the perception of too high pressure from the ACF network towards ACF-USA to be present in Dadaab. But we have found that there is an added value from ACF as operational partner in the camps. Firstly there were evident needs identified, secondly gaps were reported by all stakeholders, and lastly ACF’s technical expertise and fundraising capacity produced an added-value for an ACF intervention. Moreover, after the events of October 2011, most of the humanitarian organizations decided to reduce its staff presence and several NGOs even reduced programmes making the gaps in services greater. ACF’s intervention in the camps was therefore more needed.

From a technical point of view, relief activities in ACF’s response were adequate to the context and to the needs identified. There are exceptional cases where the response choice was shown not to be appropriate. In Somalia it was decided to do food distributions in Bakool region in response to a lack of access to food by the rural population in and around Wajid. The final disagreement of local authorities on the origin of the food and on the logistics involved resulted first in a serious security incident and finally in the suspension of the food distribution. This resulted also in a waste of time and resources, including additional logistics costs of food storage at the Kenya border. To be able to respond, ACF then focussed on the initiated cash transfer programme.

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24 Average daily arrival rate at Dadaab reception centres during July 2011 was 1,311 persons (1,194 recorded in August 2011).
25 There was a kidnaping of two international humanitarian workers on 26th October 2011.
26 Other organisations did so and could carry on with food distributions.
It is important to note that the cash distribution programmes implemented by the cash consortium in Somalia were in general properly monitored, were appropriate and had immediate effects on the beneficiary population, following post distribution monitoring reports from some members of the consortium (i.e. SCF). ACF could not carry out post distribution monitoring but the internal reports and the qualitative feedback received from beneficiaries was positive. Having no access to Somalia, it is difficult to analyse in depth whether the food distribution and cash distribution programmes in Wajid were more supplementary than complementary, which could give more accurate conclusions on the coherence of such interventions.


3.1. Appropriateness of the technical response in relation to the needs

Appropriateness of needs assessment methodology & findings

Though not at early stages, ACF carried out specific need assessments at local level in known and new areas of intervention, at least in Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti. In general, when assessing needs in new areas, the assessment teams were technically experienced and the means made available were adequate. ACF protocols and formats were widely used and the staff involved expressed that high technical and logistic support was received. However, formal needs assessments were not generally carried out in areas where other programmes were already on-going, with the exception of the standard nutritional surveys carried out in a regular basis. As a result the joint analysis with the participation of other stakeholders was more difficult and base lines were difficult to establish. The need assessments in WaSH and FSL sectors were not based on comprehensive methodologies as was the case with nutrition programmes. As a result ACF technical staff had in general greater difficulty in explaining the FSL and WaSH situation.

From another perspective, without a consistent early warning system through which the information (external information and information generated by ACF) is systematized it is more difficult to make sufficient decisions to trigger any kind of response, starting with proper needs assessments to better understand the actual situation. This is most likely the reason why few formal need assessments were carried out before the emergency declaration.

Involvement of beneficiary communities in needs assessments & strategy development

There is not a formal and systematic mechanism to ensure participation of beneficiaries, even if there are informal meetings and informative sessions.

We note here that at the beginning we were surprised by the fact that ACF-Somalia and ACF International at the end, reported more than 500,000 beneficiaries in Somalia during the emergency, while in Kenya only 90,000, despite having more operational bases and a similar budget. The criteria for counting beneficiaries and then communicating on ACF coverage appears not to be completely harmonized between countries, even if the figures may have corresponded to local habits or pre-established criteria (i.e. Somalia). At least, there are very different kinds of relief aid provided to the victims that are being counted with the same relative weight, and having same importance. A new “counting beneficiaries” guideline adopted one year ago appears not to be yet fully implemented.

4.1. Monitoring tools, sharing of relevant data and implementation of feedback loops

Between ACF Headquarters (HQ-HQ)

Within ACF International, information sharing considerably improved overtime. Either through the IEC, through the exchange of situation reports from Operations Departments to other HQ, or through the communication reports, the relevant information and data has been made available. Nevertheless, acknowledging that international appeals to the network only came from ACF-Spain or ACF-USA, the latter released an appeal which lacked a clear demand on funding and a short-term emergency response strategy for Kenya. In fact, while in the appeal it appeared that budget support requested to the network to be used in the scaling up of the nutrition programme was estimated at only €200,000, the needs and the potential response capacity from ACF was evidently greater. After the famine declaration, daily and weekly situation reports were issued and shared by managing HQs to the entire network and the support from other HQs increased rapidly in order to fund a response. An external communication strategy was successfully agreed between the whole network, implying a joint effort to communicate to public opinion and for fundraising.

But, while public funds were better coordinated and the information flow between HQs regarding negotiation with donors and submission of proposals was more than acceptable, the major weakness was certainly the information flow regarding private funds. The information provided was not regular and it was sometimes channelled through Finance Departments and at other times through Operations Departments, without a unique interlocutor in each HQ to receive and dispatch the information. The perception from most of the staff is that the process was not transparent enough and that the decision mechanism to allocate funds from one HQ to another or another country involved in the regional crisis was not clear.

Between HQ and Field Office (HQ-Field)

Activity Progress Reports (APR) are known by field programme managers at base level and in general are being used, except in Ethiopia, but not always properly used. It was not possible for the evaluators to collect and summarize progress information from the PAR without assistance, due to the number of incomplete formats, mistakes or the multiplicity of files. The APR as a monitoring tool is an important asset and its use, when adequate, is definitely accountable and is meant quality control.

Better monitoring tools and feedback loops are found regarding administrative, financial and logistics between field and HQ, with regular exchanges of progress reports and budget and procurement follow-ups (BFU, PFU). Only in the case of the PFU have we found that there is a lack of recording on final reception dates by the demanding operational base, hindering the possibility to analyze properly the procurement data (see below the evaluation questions 15 and 16).

There were adequate situation reports between the field and the HQ, and there were no relevant problems raised regarding the information flow and support from HQ to the ACF in-country teams. But there were more constraints regarding the initiative and power for decision-making by the field teams. There are coordination teams complaining that they have no power to discuss HQ decisions, for example the initiative for opening a new base. Some of the countries are even
involved in the “New Deal” approach\textsuperscript{27}, which should endow the missions with more decision-making power, but it appears not yet fully implemented.

For more practical issues, the “New Deal” approach establishes a quick mechanism of validation of proposals, limited to the Logical Framework and the budget, which is indeed in use, but was some dysfunctions when support HQs wanted more control on the proposals, claiming the validation of the full project document. It appears that support from HQ was sometimes not sufficiently tailored to the needs of the mission. For the validation of project reports the situation is similar and we can note a difference with the use and custom of other NGOs who are much more autonomous at mission level in such formal procedures.

\textbf{Between programmes and bases in the field (Field-Field)}

The monitoring system between capital and bases in the field is in general effective and based on different monitoring procedures and tools. One of them is the monthly situation reports, which are not very homogeneous across the 4 programmes and the required frequency not always respected. During the emergency for some programmes there were weekly sitreps. Budget and procurement follow-ups are more regular and accurate, and the APRs between capital coordinators and field bases have similar problems as raised above. Verbal communication by phone/videoconference is regular and fluid and field teams feel they are well supported.

During the peak of the emergency ACF-Kenya had problems in implementing a proper follow up of some programmes, most likely caused by the gaps in different coordination positions at capital level and a lack of close monitoring of activities for several months. Serious administrative problems involving misuse of funds allocated to FSL activities in one operational base were detected too late, but at least the internal decisions seem to have been consistent and quickly implemented. Again the stability of key positions appears to be a key factor for quality monitoring, and this is valid for all the 4 missions.

The case of Somalia is radically different in this regard. The programmes are monitored remotely from Nairobi, where the Country Director and the Coordination Team are based. ACF has developed a Remote Management Approach.\textsuperscript{28} ACF Somalia has developed some specific remote control tools and protocols that could be improved. These systems do not seem adapted to the current Remote Management Policy and Guidelines and definitely should be updated in order to better respond to a changing context.

The monitoring and evaluation system, as a key part of the Remote Approach has been in development since late 2011. The effectiveness of the system would have been better if there was a more consistent M&E system in place. In general we have found less systematization than we expected, since a remote monitoring would be based on monitoring of key indicators related to different systems, above all outputs / performance indicators, cost-effectiveness and cost-efficiency indicators. At the same time, there is neither a systematic monitoring system based on triangulation nor a system to incorporate feedback from final beneficiaries, though there have been progress and the mission had recently the support from a consultant, whose report was under validation at the time of the evaluation team’s visit. The lack of these tools makes the remote management more difficult as well as the quality of ACF accountability towards donors and partners.

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{27} The New Deal is an initiative to confer more autonomy and decision capacity to some ACF-France missions. Over 2011 Somalia and Ethiopia were involved in a pilot phase, in order to contribute to process design and new responsibilities description. At the time of the crisis the New Deal was not fully deployed and finalized.

\textsuperscript{28} ACF Remote Management Policy and Guidelines (2010)
\end{footnotesize}
Field teams and coordinators experienced different frustrations. On the one hand, it is very difficult to understand properly the context when the coordination team does not have the possibility to pay visits to the field. On the other hand, there are several assumptions for a proper Remote Management that after almost 4 years working under a remote approach are not yet met (for instance, the level of autonomy of the field team for information control and decision making). From both sides there is also a problem of mutual trust. The fact that not one from the current senior team in Nairobi has ever visited Somalia as ACF staff and the high turnover in key coordination positions does not facilitate the development of a relationship based on trust. A quick survey carried out in Nairobi among the coordination team reveals that the actual Remote Approach conditions correspond more to a remote control model than a remote management model, when the first is stated to be a short-term solution and not adapted to the current context.

The Remote Approach in Somalia has then certain deficiencies. There is not enough trust foundations and there is a lack of proper remote management tools. We've found the teams quite clear on these matters, while the lack of exchanges and learning on the remote approach between organisations does not facilitate comparisons. The fact that the activities are now limited to Mogadishu as the Wajid base is currently non-operational, now would be a good opportunity to revise and reinforce the Remote Approach.

5. Evaluation Criteria 5: Overall Emergency Response: LRRD

5.1. Evidence of a transition from relief/rehabilitation/development

Role of HQ in providing strategic support for transitional planning

There was no consistent strategy for transition from emergency response to rehabilitation and development, beyond the taking over of different nutrition facilities (i.e. from MSF in Ethiopia or Djibouti). However, several missions are increasing their efforts to identify and fund rehabilitation/development programmes and so giving longer term prospect to ACF activities in the country. In the case of Kenya, the Country Strategy paper proposes a more integrated approach, incorporating WaSH, FSL and Nutrition activities in all ASAL areas where ACF is operating (except in Dadaab). Nevertheless so far there are few rehabilitation / development proposals in the pipeline and longer term donors are weakly identified. Various proposals have been submitted over the last year addressing longer term interventions in Kenya, all in consortium, though there is not any approved yet and at least one already rejected.

In Djibouti, one of the main challenges seems to be how ACF move forward from the entry point projects towards long term programming. Yet, the country strategy seems well focussed on pursuing clear DRM programming, including a regional approach.


6.1. Timeliness & appropriateness of advocacy efforts

Taking advocacy in a broad sense, as an effort to promote the humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law (IHL) as well as to influence public policies and policy makers and donors, ACF International’s response to the Horn of Africa crisis appeared not to have put advocacy as a priority. ACF adopted quite a low profile and even has avoided undertaking

29 Arid and Semi Arid lands (Northern and North East Kenya)
significant advocacy action. In countries like Kenya and to a lesser degree in Ethiopia, where there is no critical security or humanitarian constraints and where advocacy activities do not necessarily put other humanitarian principles (access) at risk it should be possible to perform advocacy work, at least towards national or local policies and though keeping a low profile. Nevertheless, ACF teams in general do not consider advocacy a priority and even there is the belief that ACF does not do any advocacy at all.

There is an essential difference in the case of Somalia. Somalia is a context where humanitarian principles and law are more apparently violated; ACF has chosen to prioritise presence and access over any advocacy activity in order to protect the victims of the Somali conflict and even its own staff from violent reactions from armed groups. It is generally believed that any advocacy efforts would have very low to no impact at all. This is the reason why the international NGOs working in Somalia have practically refused to implement any advocacy strategy. This position is understandable, at least in the short term, while there are signals of a possible recovery of access in Bakool region, now under the rule of Al-Shabaab movement. Moreover, ACF decided, as did the other 15 organisations expelled from South and Central Somalia in late November 2011, on such low profile, not going publicly on the expulsion issue. This included not blaming the authorities for their decision to stop any assistance to the population and not commenting on the same authorities’ statements denying the existence of a famine or at least critical needs, as it had been declared by the United Nations.

Surprisingly, ACF has not (internally) reported any violation of human rights or IHL witnessed by ACF in Wajid, where it was the only organisation present for several months. In such case, ACF would be obliged to discuss the incidents and the testimony at the highest level and decide whether to trigger any advocacy action in coordination with field staff. So far it has not been the case and certainly there is not much internal debate on the attitude to adopt in that scenario. It’s a difficult matter and we expected more concern, but being an ethical subject there seems to be a low level of awareness. It is not clear what position ACF would adopt in the case of being requested to advocate on flagrant violations of IHL which has directly witnessed.

Different ACF HQs have not yet agreed on a consistent advocacy strategy for neither the Horn of Africa nor individual missions. In the field, it has been found that there is a low level of priority in becoming more active on advocacy and the teams recognize the need to be supported with proper advocacy expertise and tools. At HQ level, ACF is in a very exciting moment, with moves from mainly Paris and London, including some trials and some achievements.


7.1. Integration of lessons learned from previous emergency responses (e.g. Niger Famine, Earthquake, Pakistan Floods)

Regarding the strategy of the emergency response, there are several aspects raised in previous evaluations. First, the emergency pools mobilized properly for immediate support and focussed on

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31 Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK Lunchtime Lecture, Famine in the Horn of Africa: The failure of MDG 1? By Senior policy advisor of ACF UK.
the opening of operational bases in refugee camps. Their role on preparedness in such drought prone countries and for slow onset crisis is still limited.

The outlining of the short-term strategy of the response at country level during the early stages of the emergency is not yet as consistent as is desirable. The sitreps and above all the international appeal (from ACF-USA), did not adequately explain the dimension of the needs and the desirable response that ACF-USA wanted to implement in Kenya and that indeed was finally implemented.

Needs assessments are still to be formalised through proper and more standardised tools. Furthermore, involvement of communities in the needs assessment phase could be improved but is acceptable compared to a low involvement in further implementation phases. During the implementation phases formal feedback and accountability systems should be implemented as well as mechanisms for better information to final beneficiaries.

Finally, transitional strategies and work plans are still quite weak and ACF should definitely improve the drought cycle management in the region through upcoming DRM programming.


8.1. Timeliness & Appropriateness of Emergency Pool staff

Programme staff

Programme staff belonging to the existing Emergency Pools (Madrid, Paris) and other new staff, were deployed from July 2011\(^{32}\). This happened either after request by the country mission involved or initiative by the HQ managing the emergency response\(^{33}\). These additional resources were devoted to exploratory missions, the opening of a new base or to emergency nutrition programmes. This strategy makes sense when most of the teams are scaling up running programmes or additional expertise was needed for existing bases.

In Ethiopia, most of the emergency staff deployed by the pool was assigned to the Dollo Ado site, leaving the mission staff to deal with the other hot spots in the country. This strategy proved to be generally effective, with only few limitations: sometimes the staffs were not experienced\(^{34}\) or autonomous enough. Occasionally, having just arrived staff were required to go back to HQ for inductions or trainings. There is a feeling in some teams on having been pressured to deploy the emergency pool/roster staff at any price. This sometimes added pressure to the mission or placed it in a difficult position, taking into account the limitations for internationals to work in some of these countries (most notably Ethiopia)\(^{35}\).

In Djibouti, HQ deployments (Emergency Pool, flying pool and ad hoc recruitments from the already existing rosters) have been assigned to cover gaps or support the mission on absence of recruited staff, making use lately of the Paris HQ flying pool.

There was a common question on the short duration of the deployments, not so much in the case of the emergency pools, which have deployments limited to up to 2 months which was in some cases surpassed, but in particular for subsequent deployments.

\(^{32}\) See resume of Emergency Pools’ support to Horn of Africa crisis in Annex 5.

\(^{33}\) 1st Sitrep for Dollo Ado is dated on 21\(^{st}\) July 2011.

\(^{34}\) This refers to ad hoc newly recruited staff, not the members of the emergency pool

\(^{35}\) As an example, in Save the Children UK in Ethiopia, 6 international staff deployed in Gode, Somali region in July were kicked out of the country by the GoE.
Considering the main response arrived late, the question whether the use of the Emergency Pool for preparedness would have accelerated the timeliness of the response. Undoubtedly, the inputs from the Emergency Pool during a preparedness phase would have contributed to better prevent a major crisis, at least where ACF was already working (see above evaluation question 1. Timeliness of the response in each area of operation/activity).

**Support staff**

In Ethiopia, there was not a proportionate deployment of programme and support staff which added a burden to an already stretched administration work force of the mission. They were required to take care of new international staff coming in, on top of their normal tasks and, occasionally, to visit field bases in order to recruit local support personnel.

Another result of this imbalance was that unsolved issues persisted after the peak of the crisis, which could have been prevented by increasing the support on finance, admin or HR at the time of the emergency.

ACF-Somalia requested support for proposal writing, receiving immediate positive response from HQ. The experience has been quite positive; the quality of the proposals at least was maintained and has been reflected in the usual high rate of success (approved vs. submitted)36.

In Kenya, only the emergency pool from Madrid was requested to reinforce the mission capacity to launch activities in Dadaab refugee camps, but it included an administration coordinator that contributed appropriately to better install the base and ensuring alignment with AECID requirements with ACF-USA procedures and ACF-Kenya mission structure.

### 8.2. Appropriateness of pre-departure training & briefing (PDA)

There has been positive feedback on the usefulness of the pre-departure training and briefing for international staff. Sometimes there was some confusion between the PDA to be given in Paris and the one to be given in Nairobi (at the ACF Regional Training Centre) before a memorandum of understanding was signed. This ACF regional capacity might clearly strength the preparation of new staff arriving to the region.

It has been reported that the majority of the staff deployed in the peak of the emergency in the Dollo Ado and Dadaab camps were both skilled and experienced and, as well, correctly briefed. In absence of those two first conditions, skills and experience, even good PDA systems cannot replace the lack of expertise and autonomy required for these tasks, therefore, although necessary, the utility of this training should not be overestimated.

The trainings and toolkits that equipped international staff deployed were very comprehensive. Some respondents, having been deployed previously with other organizations pointed this out, which is as a good indicator of the care ACF provides to support its overseas staff.

For the national staff the feedback is less uniform. There is variable effectiveness and in particular cases the briefing to new staff and the induction into the organisation have been rather weak. Somehow ACF has taken more care when a new base was being opened than when programmes were scaling up in already operational bases.

36 See the data in Annex 8.
8.3. Inclusion of key/experienced national staff in emergency response systems & structures

National senior staff were fully involved in the response, of course in Somalia, but as well in Kenya and Ethiopia. However and in general, ACF have evidently found it very difficult to retain very experienced national staff for long. Turnover in 2011 was high and it was not unusual for senior staff to be covering vacant positions, or sometimes to be engaged in a couple of different roles at the same time. In a situation like this, it is challenging for the mission to release key staff to the emergency leaving the rest of the mission projects understaffed.

**Figure 5**

![Evolution of ACF work force in the 4 missions](image)

The peak of recruitment and then the greater capacity of ACF in regards to human resources happened between September and October 2011. Counting the 4 missions ACF peaked at 770 staff deployed (national and international) at one time.

8.4. Appropriateness and compliance with HR procedures

**Job description**

In general, the Job Descriptions (JD) specifically designed for the emergency response were excellent and accurately reflected the expectations of each position. On rare occasions, the JD has not been produced or validated by the direct supervisor. This, acknowledging it as an exceptional case, has been unsuitable for the team, since it represents a waste of time and resources, something to avoid in ER, since more international staff deployed does not mean automatically more performance or more efficacy.

The supervision and decision chain seems quite clear for everyone, and any initial doubt was quickly solved after briefing and induction phases.

**Recruitment of national staff**

Even under pressure, the procedures for national staff selection and recruitment were generally respected. This process was particularly difficult in Somalia, but given the contextual constraints the recruitment processes were acceptable. The major problem was probably the frustration generated in the teams due to the slowness of the process, taking too much time to get validation from the coordination level and at the same time acceptance from local authorities and communities.
Salary scales

We have obtained different feedback on the ACF salary scale. In the case of the international staff there is a general assumption that the salary and conditions are below the average, at least clearly in the capital cities. In the case of the national staff it is more varied, probably depending on the level of responsibility and experience. The higher the level, the less competitive the ACF salary scale is perceived to be. Indeed, salary/allowances scale and uncertainty (too short-term contracts) is one of the main reasons given as cause of the high turnover of ACF staff. It is noteworthy that this turnover is quite similar when comparing national and international staff in countries like Kenya. It is also as high in the capital as in the operational bases. Only in Somalia is there a significant difference in turnover between national and international staff (low in the field, high in Nairobi).37

The salary scales set up by each country are scrupulously respected, but there are specific cases where breaking the rule can be properly justified. Such may be the case of Dadaab, where the recruitment process has been especially difficult and the conditions offered by ACF not really attractive. The result is a team with high motivation and skill level, but with almost no experience with ACF and little experience in refugees or IDP contexts. Moreover, the team was completed only several months after the decision to launch activities in Dadaab had been taken. This fact, coupled with the security constraints, has delayed the start of the programmes.38

Contracts & compliance labour laws

We found that the internal contracting procedures and the local labour laws, when existing, are highly respected. Practically no problems have been raised in this regard and the evaluation team do not have evidence on the contrary.

There is a general observation related to the short term contracts of a large portion of the national staff. This includes those of employees attached to particular projects whose contract duration does not match the length of the project, when the activities for which they are responsible are scheduled up to its end. This is also happens in emergency projects. Also there are technical, logistic or administrative coordinators with shorter contracts than the country strategy. As said before, the uncertainty does not favour efficiency, compromise and motivation from the national staff, finally resulting in high turnover in key positions.

Security protocol & management

Security protocols were in place and respected. However, more incidents were reported in 2011 than in 2010. This is likely due to the intensification of the operations in unsecure areas and the inclusion of new bases. The evaluation team could not find records on any security adviser visiting the missions up to late 2011. The Dollo Ado operation in Ethiopia worked in a complex environment from the beginning, which is commendable considering different agencies have suffered major security issues. There are internal reports which stress the necessity of upgrading of the security requirements, to continue working in this camp.39

ACF-Kenya, who does not have a security officer, requested the collaboration of ACF-Somalia in order to carry out a security assessment in Dadaab, prior to the decision of the programme opening. This is one of the few examples of collaboration between both missions. Definitely,

37 Currently, national senior staff in ACF-Somalia’s office in Nairobi has hardly 13 months average duration in their positions. The average is 17 months for the current expatriates (see Annex 5).
38 Delivery of ACF relief aid is effective in Dadaab camps only from January 2012, 6 months after the first need assessment carried out by ACF.
39 Incident report DA 1201111
regarding security, there could be more coordination between ACF-Kenya and ACF-Somalia, for instance for the security management in Nairobi.

8.5. Appropriateness of support systems at HQ level

In Kenya the team would have benefitted from more support from HQ in order to avoid the gaps that the team had for some key positions such as the Logistic Coordinator, the Administration Coordinator, the Nutrition Coordinator and several field officers in the worst moment of the crisis (July, August and September). We believe that the capacity of the network was underused, given that there was not a massive need for international staff, just an interest in avoiding gaps in permanent positions and few additional profiles. For instance, ACF-Spain reacted from the first moment providing a roster of up to 51 profiles that was not used at all; no mission requested any profile from the roster. Admitting the existence of bureaucratic obstacles in the country and the doubts on the helpfulness of receiving international staff for short term assignments, programme implementation could have accelerated and further managerial problems could have been reduced (see evaluation question 27 here below). Also in Kenya the validation of the methodology to carry out a salary survey in the country is taking too much time, while the improvement of the competitiveness of ACF in the country appears to be a priority for the field team, affecting all kinds of operations, emergency response included.

The toolkits and protocols that every member of the teams are equipped with are comprehensive and exhaustive, but, surprisingly for the evaluation team, in an emergency context, a large amount of decision making processes were still made by a “take the phone and call Paris” way. It seems there is a strong dependency on HQ at the point of making decisions that eventually could have been taken in country by the CDs and its senior management staff.

8.6. Integration of lessons learned from previous emergency responses (e.g. Niger Famine, Haiti Earthquake, Pakistan Floods)

Most of the issues prioritized through previous emergency experiences correspond to the evaluation questions 8 to 12 here above. All of them appear to have improved, except perhaps the deployment of a security focal person to develop context-specific security & safety procedures. Bearing in mind the security constraints in new operational areas, for instance Dadaab camps, and knowing the lack of security officer in ACF-Kenya, it would have been advisable to reinforce this ability from HQ, and not just having the momentary support of the security officer from ACF-Somalia. The capacity of the network seems to have been underexploited.


9.1. Availability and effective & timely use of regional emergency stocks

There are no emergency stocks at country level, but we believe that this has not been a limiting factor due to the kind of needs and the response provided by ACF. At regional level not all logistic coordinators in the four missions are aware that there is a regional procurement centre for East Africa in Dubai. Though this logistic centre was not operational at the moment of the 2011 crisis, the knowledge of its objectives and utilization’s protocols should be shared thoroughly as soon as possible.
The Regional Logistics Centre in Nairobi is not exploited in full at regional level and is just focussed on ACF-USA missions in the region (Kenya, Uganda and South Sudan). However ACF-Somalia did make use of the Regional Logistics Centre on a few occasions.

9.2. Appropriateness of logistical support provided

Per programme area

Logistics support is in general one of the main strengths in ACF. Supplies, infrastructure and equipment are available generally on time and in accordance with the technical requirements, ensuring the implementation of the programmes in the right manner. The equipment in operational bases appears to be adequate to the needs, their deterioration is not excessive and the inventory is well controlled. Vehicles are sufficient, in good condition and are utilized to their full capacity.

Nutrition and WaSH related logistics have been widely demanded by the field missions during this emergency. There is no evidence that logistics is responsible for any major delays or inappropriateness on the response. On the contrary, it appears to be sometimes the logistic staffs who are anticipating the program needs and priorities.

Coordination level

In most cases, the programme and logistic staff in the bases have a high consideration of the support they received from the capital. And the same is perceived from the logistics staff as regards of the support they receive from HQ. The logistics support has been important for the smooth opening of new bases in difficult environments.

9.3. Appropriateness and compliance with logistical procedures

Procurement

The procurement procedures are properly known by logistics and programme staff and, as far as the evaluation team could check, strictly respected. No major obstacles were recorded and programme implementation was well supported through ACF logistics services. The Procurement Follow Up (PFU) files in capital and in operational bases do not reveal failures on first-priority supplies or equipment, with few exceptions. On one hand, the opening of new operational bases has encountered additional problems to receive the requested equipment on time. Also in Kenya, several gaps at coordination level (technical and logistic coordinators) between July and September meant a poor forecast of logistics needs and a delay of the procurement in some bases trying to scale-up nutrition or WaSH activities.

Even if the PFU are not completed with all the actual reception dates and so having a partial analysis of the procurement data, it can be estimated, for instance, for local and national procurement, an average delivery delay of around 20 days in the case of Kenya or Ethiopia during the first 6 months of response. For international purchases, the timing of procurement has been acceptable and the only constraint raised was because of the validation process at HQ (taking between 1 and 2 weeks). However it is the view of the evaluation team that this has not been a major obstacle affecting the timeliness of the response.

In Somalia, due to restricted autonomy and the high dependence on Nairobi there was an average delay in procurement of just over one month. Due to the experience of the staff and the highly standardized activities of the programmes (Nutrition and WaSH), this did not result in a significant
delay on the implementation. Only some medical supplies have had significant delays well above the average. We think that the procurement problems encountered in Somalia are not related to internal procedures but to the appropriateness or acceptance from local authorities and the negotiation difficulties met, as the problem reported in paragraph 53 above.

Stock use, supervision and management

There were no significant contingency stocks in place, apart from some remaining equipment from closed programs that was possible to use.

Nevertheless, and thanks to the pro-activeness of the HQ logistics support and some locally made quick decision on procurements, there is no evidence that logistics constraints have had a negative impact on the delivery of program in this emergency.

9.4. Timeliness and appropriateness of communication platforms (Internet, HF/VHF, Telephone/Satellite telephone)

Overall all ACF operational bases are well equipped with proper communications platforms. The evaluation team did not perceived complaints on the timeliness of the communication equipment. Where there is the need of HF or VHF radios the network is in place and the mobile phone network is completed with satellite phones to add more security. Internet connexion in Mogadishu is very weak and does not permit videoconference with the minimum quality most of the time. There are alternatives to improve this service that are still under consideration by logistics departments. We find that it is really important to have good connectivity in Somalia, no matter the cost, to improve the remote management conditions, so ACF should explore and invest in any advanced technical solution available.

9.5. Integration of lessons learned from previous emergency responses (e.g. Niger Famine, Haiti Earthquake, Pakistan Floods)

There is very little awareness at field level on the recommendations or lessons learned related to logistics from previous evaluations. Nevertheless, the main themes identified in the ER Learning Project were fulfilled in a satisfactory manner, except for the preposition of stocks at regional level that has been relatively unknown and underused.


10.1. Strengths & Weaknesses of ACF HQ coordination

There are more strengths than weaknesses in the HQ coordination system. A general comment received from all ACF staff interviewed is that coordination within ACF International has improved since the previous emergency response. The Emergency Management System (EMS) itself is an evidence of this effort at international level.
### Strengths

- Emergency Management System evolving and improving
- Increased flow of resources between HQ (public funds, human resources & Emergency Pools, logistics)
- Sensitization of staff on the need to better coordinate within the network for a better emergency response.
- Increasing protocols for HQ coordination and support (communication, public funding support, private fundraising, human resources, logistics, etc.)

### Weaknesses

- Issuing of accurate appeals and short-term ER strategies to the network
- Transparency and communication (frequency, tools and clear focal persons) on fundraising and allocation between HQ, primarily private funds.
- Use of staff rosters provided by supporting HQ.

There were very few regional coordination activities in the Horn before July and during the response. In September 2011 a Country Directors meeting took place in Nairobi to discuss on some cooperative initiatives, above all on DRM and Communication/Advocacy at regional levels. For joint context analysis, preparedness planning and to prepare the emergency response, it would have been logical for this to have happened at a much earlier stage.

Even between ACF-Somalia and ACF-Kenya who have both the coordination teams based in Nairobi, the coordination has been very low. At technical level, for instance, both countries have not exchanged on the cash programmes, when at regional level ACF-Kenya has been a reference and their experience and staff could have been of great value to ACF-Somalia who implemented a cash programme for the first time in Bakool. More exchanges to check and eventually harmonize nutrition protocols and criteria between Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia would also be desirable, since in the two first countries there was nutritional activities with Somali populations coming from Southern and Central Somalia, where ACF also implemented nutritional programmes. The evaluation team has found little evidence of information sharing between the Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia programmes on issues related the crisis, beyond the prescheduled meeting held in September 2011, much later than the genesis of the crisis. Only the presence of the Emergency Pools in Dollo Ado and Dadaab had enhanced exchanges between Somalia and Ethiopia.

### 10.2. Availability and/or use of ACFIN coordination guidelines to guide collaboration between all HQs (Paris, Madrid, New York, London & Montreal)

The Emergency Management System has already taken advantage of the experience in Horn of Africa and the last version (February 2012) provides a good framework of collaboration between HQs in emergency operations, although this document is not fully developed by sector or department.

For example, in relation to the collaboration between communication departments within ACF International it seems remarkable that there is not a written communications protocol.

Regarding human resources, including coordination between the existing emergency pools, there is excellent coordination, mainly between Madrid and Paris. There have been initiatives like the underused rooster proposed by ACF-Spain at the earliest stages of the emergency response that could reinforce this collaboration even more, despite the fact that there is not a specific HR protocol for emergencies.

Between administration and finance departments, there was some trust gaps due to some communication breakdowns concerning availability and agreement of private funds, mainly due to
disagreements on activities and budget details or lack of appointed focal persons. There is no protocol guiding this in relation to ER and it may be more necessary than in other departments. Though there have been sub-agreements signed early in the Horn of Africa crisis, they have not been followed until very late (April 2012), which have led to misunderstandings.

10.3. Participation of ACF staff in key UN cluster groups and other inter-agency coordination initiatives

ACF in the region is present mainly and with enough strength in the nutrition clusters. But as ACF is smaller compared to other international NGOs in almost all of these forums, its capacity for influencing and leading is limited. In Djibouti, the cluster is not yet fully active and this approach is therefore quite new for the country.

The relations with UN are different in Somalia. It’s difficult to know whether ACF’s neutrality may have been put in danger because of maintaining frequent contacts with UN agencies (OCHA, UNICEF and WFP) or because of accepting UN funds (UNICEF), since they may not be perceived neutral or independent by local actors. Undoubtedly, the origin of funds and resources seem to be a key issue in order to operate under strict humanitarian independence in Somalia. ACF should take into consideration and if necessary revise the funding policy for the country. To have an observer status inside the Nutrition Working Group, instead of being partner or member is perhaps a wise decision and not to talk about ACF participation in the cluster coordination structure (Committee or Secretariat), which should be avoided.

Nevertheless, even if there is no evidence of a loss of neutrality, ACF has not kept an undoubted and strict independence, due to its policy of funding and relations with organisations or institutions that have not such neutral perception from all the local actors or parties in conflict. ACF should stand more autonomous from UN agencies than it has been in the recent past.


11.1. Integration with different coordination mechanisms (at field and HQ level)

ACF Emergency Response Standard Operating Protocol considers communication activities as one of the pillars of a coordinated emergency response. Two elements are suggested for this coordination: the managing HQ commit to share detailed situation reports (Sitreps) at least once a week the first month or more frequently if requested by needs (to be discussed between HQ ER focal points) and secondly, the managing HQ commits to accept other HQ press officers if the context allows it.

During the response, there was sufficient sharing of daily and weekly Sitreps among headquarters in the initial phase of the emergency. Comprehensive monthly reports were widely disseminated among different stakeholders and the press. But between ACF HQs the flow of information declined quickly. On the other hand, the communication strategy and messages were not always validated by Operations Departments, which in complex contexts is a must due to strategic or even security reasons.

The communication activities were coordinated by the Paris HQ Emergency Pool after an initial formal request from the Somalia mission CD. Apart from the coordination role taken by Paris HQ in July 2011 and maintained until beginning of 2012, at least 2 other communications officers from
Madrid and London HQs were deployed. New York explicitly delegated communications to the Paris HQ.

From the coordination unit, a certain level of control was put on the press trips/visit for sensitive reasons mainly to Ethiopia and to Djibouti; it seems that CD's had an appropriate level of control on the communication activities in each country, and in general the coordination with the regional communication unit worked appropriately.

The Regional Communications Officer was recruited for a duration of 4 months to replace the initial Emergency Pool deployment. As Somalia was the epicentre of the crisis it made sense that the position was line managed by the Somalia mission and based in Nairobi. The ToR for such post was initially very ambitious, including the building of a regional advocacy strategy; this was later on revised and adjusted to a more realistic job description suitable to the budgeted 4 months deployment.

11.2. Relevance of communication focus

The amount of press releases, coverage and communication appearances in the media – newspapers, magazines, radio, and television – for the operation were impressive. There was no less than 400 pieces of communication in total on the 5 HQ, most of them concentrated during July, August and September 2011.

Messages transmitted had a strong focus on drought, as compared with the other underlying causes of the famine: conflict, market blockages, food price rising, etc. This is not exclusively of ACF, but for the vast majority of the agencies operating in the Horn of Africa.

There were some constraints regarding internal information, like some inaccurate estimates on number of beneficiaries reported (Somalia), outcomes attribution (Djibouti) or a weak analysis on underlining causes and timing (Ethiopia).

Degree of beneficiary-based perspectives

An important part of the communication notes are devoted to beneficiary points of view and testimonies, mainly those elaborated by Madrid HQ. In the French communications, it seems is still more attractive to present the point of view of the expat working for ACF. It may be interesting to reflect on an eventual relation to the idiosyncrasy of these two HQs, since it looks like Spanish identifies more with the victims and French with the “saviours”.

Emphasis placed on less publicised aspects of the emergency

As said above, communications focuses principally on the effects of the drought, undermining other causes in the analysis of the crisis, as food prices, inflation, terms of trade, insecurity, etc. Above all, in Somalia the underlying crisis (on-going conflict) was far behind in the press kits.

Major events as the catastrophe in Kobe, one of the Dollo Ado camps, in the month of July and August, or the expulsion of ACF from Wajid in Somalia were little or not at all disseminated for events of such magnitude.

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40 See the summary of communication activities in Annex 6.
41 May be following local criteria or agreed with partners, but not internally harmonized with other ACF missions. See also paragraph 58.
42 UNHCR Report on mortality in Kobe, Ethiopia, August 2011
11.3. Integration of new social media outlets

Range of platforms used (e.g. blogs, websites)

New social media was widely utilized for communication of this emergency. Twitter followers, Facebook friends gained and hits on a Horn of Africa related article on the websites account for thousands. However, as compared with other organizations, ACF do not use blogs of its own staff or visitors or VIPs visits to its sites as widely as it could.

The overall impact, as well as the fundraising effects of the communication campaigns, has been quite positive, even more knowing that the moment of the peak of the crisis (July and August) is a holiday period in the western counties.

11.4. Integration of lessons learned from previous emergency responses (e.g. Niger Famine, Haiti Earthquake, Pakistan Floods)

There were improvements during the emergency response to the Horn of Africa crisis comparing with former experiences. Communications focal persons were deployed during the initial period of the response, covering the needs of all ACF HQ. The fact of having communications staff deployed in the field has enhanced the coordination between the country and the HQ. In addition, the high level of coordination between HQ has allowed the undertaking of joint communications actions and campaigns with largely positive results. However, there was less awareness-raising of the less publicised dimensions of the emergency. Regarding the incorporation of social media outlets and the strengthening of real-time information about the emergency response refer to the question 24 here above.


12.1. Capacity to raise private and public funds at country and HQ level

ACF capacity to raise funds is growing and for the Horn of Africa crisis the amount of public and private funds raised is quite important. More than €17 million had been raised from June to end September 2011, including €6.7 million of private funds. Up to December 2011 the total amount signed in the four countries rose to approximately €24 million. Only ACF-France procured more than €6.7 million of private funds that were shared between the four countries. For example, ACF-Kenya increased the portfolio of projects signed from €3 to 9 million, while Somalia raised from less than €3 million up to almost €11 million in few months.

Moreover, the pace of implementation appears to be behind the pace of fundraising. This may not happen only in the very early stages of the response, when public funds are not yet made certain through the signing of contract. In this case, in general the capacity of ACF International was enough to launch and carry out the implementation of the emergency response.

In regards to the proposal making, there was a significant effort, with at least 78 proposals related to the crisis worth €41.3 million and submitted for the four countries. The average success has reached 65% in number of proposals and 59% in financial volume. There was better donor

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43 It is worth noting that out of this amount 1.7 million was raised by ACF-USA and that even from this figure 968 k€ went to ACF-France for Somalia.

44 The analysis has been done considering information provided by ACF teams and up to March 2012. See Annex 8 for details.
targeting (>80 % success) in Somalia and Ethiopia, while Djibouti and Kenya had a success rate of slightly over 50%.

In almost all cases in 2011 institutional funds (ECHO, HRF) were generally raised by negotiations at country level with eventual support from HQ for proposal writing, budgeting support and submission. During the emergency, funds were immediately made available by HQ for Dollo Ado opening or to scale up activities in Somalia. Funding from CIDA was facilitated by both Montreal and managing HQs. Madrid facilitated AECID and other public and private resources, as well as submitting to ECHO on behalf of ACF-USA and a CIFF grant was secured with the help of ACF-UK.

In general, Horn of Africa funds and ACF own private funds were allocated by Paris HQ according to requests from its missions as well as ACF-USA for Kenya.

The capacity for raising private funds at country level was not explored in Ethiopia in 2011 or even in the past. In Djibouti, it is already in the plans for 2012 to organizing “La course contre la Faim” as in country fundraising initiative.

12.2. Appropriateness of administrative & finance support provided

Per programme area

The administrative support to the different programmes is considered appropriate in most cases.

There was a particular case of lack of control and follow up on the performance and integrity of a field team managing a cash programme promoting income generating activities in one of the operational bases in Kenya. We believe that the problem was exceptional and could have been easily avoided through a better technical and administrative control on the activities from the capital base and through a better information and involvement of the communities and beneficiaries in ACF programme. Probably, in the absence of gaps at coordination level such events would not have easily happened.

National and HQ level

The Djibouti mission was fully supported by international admin and HR positions from the opening. There was any gap on recruitment on this sector and the resources allocated seemed proportionate to the mission.

On the other hand, in Ethiopia the mission seemed clearly overstretched, with the 2011 budget more than doubling the 2010 one, and 2 new bases opened. No financial support was received by the mission, even though some new requirements were introduced by the GoE for INGOs in the second half of the year and there were new challenges due to new donors’ requirements for financial reporting.

The administrative and financial support and follow-up provided from HQ was in general close and continuous. There are no major constraints and the teams appear to be properly supported.

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45 The Canadian International Development Agency
46 The 70/30 new rule of the GoE for NGOs, whereby budgets has to be disaggregated by programs (70% allocation) and support (30% allocation)
12.3. Timeliness of the disbursement of funds for the emergency response

The so called bridge funds and own funds were delivered on time and necessary risks were taken, with few exceptions. ACF-USA appears to have less capacity to advance the necessary funds in order to respond to the needs identified. The opening of the base and the programme in West Pokot (Kenya), despite having the positive feedback from one of the most reliable emergency donors (ECHO), took more time than desirable due to indecision and the need to wait for a full ‘green light’ from HQ. The fact is that from the needs assessment carried out in May 2011 in West Pokot County, ACF was only operational from late October 2011. In our opinion, after the declaration of national disaster by the GoK, a specific demand from the national Nutritional Technical Forum, full communication campaigns launched by ACF related to the regional crisis and clear support from public donors ACF should have taken greater risk launching the programme as soon as it was feasible and requested from the field.

The capacity of ACF-France to raise funds not only for the three countries under Paris HQ management (Ethiopia, Somali and Djibouti), but also to provide financial support to Kenya was remarkable. There was a first envelope of €200,000 from the emergency reserve (as stated by the EMS) allocated just after the international appeal was launched by ACF-USA and a second envelope of €270,000 just afterwards for logistics support for the opening of new bases and programmes. But the approval process took too much time. The signature of the first amount happened only in October, almost 3 months after the appeal and the second was signed in March 2011, despite having an eligibility date from September 2011. There was even a third envelope of €196,000 from ACF-Spain that was signed just some days before the release of this report. Another envelope from ACF-France also for Kenya of €790,000 has been “in the pipeline” for 6 months but are not yet signed, while the conditions on the ground have been changing. The procedures between HQ for the disbursement of funds could undoubtedly improve. There were communication constraints, like the lack of clear focal points for the information flow (for instance, during the absence of the Financial Director of ACF-France), with the subsequent possible damage to the transparency in the relations between different HQs.

Timeliness in the implementation of activities can be analysed through the actual expenditure of funds available at country level. The fact that the activities under each contract started really at least 1 to 2 months after the eligibility date, and in some cases more, is quite revealing. At the same time the pace of expenditure is 60 % to 80 % of the average available following a linear projection. Both facts will probably imply the need to request no-cost extensions for many contracts.

12.4. Management of multi-donor (public & private) and multi-HQ funding - Availability and use of guidelines

The list and variety of public and private donors is crucial to the financial security of ACF in the countries involved in the emergency response. But this involves dealing with many different regulations on project and contract management, budgeting, reporting, etc. Except for some dysfunctions there have not been major problems to date. However, a full analysis would only be possible after closing all running contracts and budget reports are finalised. The problems raised refer to the fact that supporting HQs may request a different methodology for validation and submission processes than the one applied by the managing HQ with its mission in the field. Furthermore, the proper management of all contracts (according to the specific guidelines) depend on the experience of the administrative staff and how it has been reinforced. Some missions with new donors had the support of additional administrative staff (Somalia) or the help from the Emergency Pools (Kenya, Ethiopia) during the most intense phases of the response. The management has then improved and the guidelines from each donor are available. There are some
more problems with the Spain-based donors regarding the availability of translated guidelines and the communication to solve management doubts, but even this is improving with the involvement of the Emergency Pool in Madrid.

12.5. Integration of lessons learned from previous emergency responses (e.g. Niger Famine, Haiti Earthquake, Pakistan Floods)

Separation of donor management and payment processing activities

At field level there was no separation of donor management or payment processing activities. The recommendation is not known, but at least there is agreement on the need of reinforcing the administrative staff during emergencies in order to cope properly with the increase of all kind of resources.

Two-tier drafting of proposals (field-based drafting of programme activities, HQ-based drafting programme budgets)

Again, there is a general ignorance on this recommendation. Nevertheless, there are different opinions on its utility and indeed this may depend on various factors: donor regulations (complexity, flexibility), experience of the staff, the existence of contingency planning (with scenarios and budget forecast for selected emergency responses), etc. In our opinion the recommendation would not be always suitable. On one hand it should not be really a discharge of work to the field staff and on the other hand, budgeting properly a project proposal needs thorough knowledge on the situation of the mission and field details that could be out of HQ hand. In addition, the requested increase of administrative staff at field level when responding to important emergencies can make dispensable such involvement from HQ. In fact, this is what happened instead of two-tier drafting of proposals.
The following table is a summary of the evaluation question and criteria following a simple scoring from 1 to 5. It is based on findings and agreed within the evaluation team but it is not free of bias and so its value lies more in the relative comparison than in the absolute scoring of each question and criteria. Due to its visual value we have decided to include it in this report.

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<th>Evaluation Criteria &amp; Evaluation Questions</th>
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<td>14. Appropriateness of pre-departure training &amp; briefing (PDA)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Inclusion of key/experienced national staff in emergency response systems &amp; structures</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Appropriateness and compliance with HR procedures</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Appropriateness of support systems at HQ level</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Integration of lessons learned from previous emergency responses (e.g. Niger Famine, Haiti Earthquake, Pakistan Floods)</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Evaluation Criteria &amp; Evaluation Questions</td>
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<td><strong>Evaluation Criteria 9 : Systems : Logistics</strong></td>
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<td>3,6</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Availability and effective &amp; timely use of regional emergency stocks</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Appropriateness of logistical support provided</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. Appropriateness and compliance with logistical procedures</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>22. Timeliness and appropriateness of communication platforms (Internet, HF/VHF, Telephone/Satellite telephone)</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>23. Integration of lessons learned from previous emergency responses (e.g. Niger Famine, Haiti Earthquake, Pakistan Floods)</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Evaluation Criteria 10 : Systems : Coordination</strong></td>
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<td>24. Strengths &amp; Weaknesses of ACF HQ coordination</td>
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<td>✔</td>
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<td>25. Availability and/or use of ACFIN coordination guidelines to guide collaboration between all HQs (Paris, Madrid, New York, London &amp; Montreal)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>26. Participation of ACF staff in key UN cluster groups and other inter-agency coordination initiatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>✔</td>
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<td><strong>Evaluation Criteria 11 : Systems : Communication</strong></td>
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<td>3,8</td>
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<tr>
<td>27. Integration with different coordination mechanisms (at field and HQ level)</td>
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<td>✔</td>
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<td>28. Relevance of communication focus</td>
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<td>29. Integration of new social media outlets</td>
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<td>30. Integration of lessons learned from previous emergency responses (e.g. Niger Famine, Haiti Earthquake, Pakistan Floods)</td>
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<td><strong>Evaluation Criteria 12 : Systems : Administration &amp; Finance</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>31. Integration with different coordination mechanisms (at field and HQ level)</td>
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<td>32. Appropriateness of Internal Communications process and systems</td>
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<td>33. Capacity to raise private and public funds at country and HQ level</td>
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<td>34. Appropriateness of administrative &amp; finance support provided</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>35. Timeliness of the disbursement of funds for the emergency response</td>
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<td>36. Management of multi-donor (public &amp; private) and multi-HQ funding - Availability and use of guidelines</td>
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<tr>
<td>37. Integration of lessons learned from previous emergency responses (e.g. Niger Famine, Haiti Earthquake, Pakistan Floods)</td>
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**APPR(AISAL)**:

1 = Negative — 2 = Rather weak / Not implemented — 3 = Slightly Positive — 4 = Positive — 5 = Very Positive
**Figure 6**

Radar Diagram Showing Scores from Summary of Evaluation Results.
CONCLUSIONS

C.1. The response of ACF, among other agencies, has contributed to reduce the impact of the crisis on the lives and livelihoods of the population of the Horn of Africa in 2011. However, ACF’s overall response arrived once the humanitarian emergency was already set externally and a famine declared by UN in Southern and Central Somalia.

C.2. ACF appears to be less able to trigger an appropriate and timely response in the challenging context of a slow-onset emergency than in sudden crises. ACF missions in the Horn of Africa have were not a relevant humanitarian actor in preparedness and could definitely respond better and earlier during the phase of acute food and livelihood crisis47.

C.3. ACF has not yet developed a comprehensive regional Disaster Risk Management approach, adapted to a context where droughts are becoming more frequent and conflicts are reducing humanitarian access. Only ACF-Ethiopia had in place any DRM programming before the 2011 emergency.

C.4. After July 2011, when the crisis was evident and largely present in the media, ACF implemented emergency projects in the areas of nutrition, WaSH and FSL. The response was coherent to the needs, adequately coordinated with other stakeholders and in general appropriately implemented, acknowledging more limited access, coverage and timeliness of the ACF response in Somalia.

C.5. As far as information from stakeholders and EWS is widely available and ACF is able to generate highly valuable context data, nevertheless a more systematic early warning information analysis seems possible.

C.6. Initiatives focused on preparedness, including emergency planning, are still underdeveloped within ACF International in this region. Steps to take ERPP framework have been noticed in Ethiopia only, and there does not seem to be a region wide approach.

C.7. This crisis has provided the opportunity for ACF to reinforce and accelerate the implementation of common emergency response protocols. The operations have involved 2 managing HQs (ACF-France and ACF-USA) and a coordination system between HQs (operational and support) was in place, increasing the resource sharing and performing better at all levels. The Emergency Management System responds to the institutional needs, even if there are a few aspects to be improved regarding communication and coordination between HQs. The fact of having 2 operational HQs involved has reinforced and accelerated the implementation of such common Emergency Response protocols48.

C.8. It should be noted that Horn of Africa regional structures (Regional Logistic and Training Centers) have had a very limited role in the emergency response and that exchanges between ACF in the four countries were almost nonexistent.

C.9. Balancing initiative and autonomy of the ACF in-country teams in the region was a challenge. Sometimes, institutional needs did not match humanitarian priorities perceived at field level and at the same time there were differences of opinions within the network. This situation has created stress, and such institutional inconsistencies risk to be transmitted to beneficiary communities and stakeholders. The re-opening of Dadaab as an operational base is an example. Having withdrawn in 2009, the base was re-opened with needs and gaps to be covered. ACF was most welcome back but there are doubts on how this presence will last. The humanitarian needs are evident and the forecast is that these needs will again increase in 2012 and 2013. No matter the financial and security constraints, ACF will have to stay, complying with commitments made and avoiding inconsistency.

47 IPC phase 3.
48 With a new version issued on February 2012.
C.10. Though examples of good practices and programming initiatives have been found (DRM program in Ethiopia, cash consortium in Kenya, the idea of a regional DRM approach, etc.) they are sparse, not institutionalized and not well shared among the missions in the Horn of Africa.

C.11. The evaluation team found that ACF did not taken fully into consideration the recommendations of the previous emergency response evaluations. This indicates that the ACF Emergency Response Learning Project needs to be reinforced and more widely participative.

C.12. To retain skilled national staff in field bases seems to be a challenge with the current incentives package that ACF is currently offering and that concerns mainly salaries, allowances, contract duration and future development.

C.13. The speed of deployment and adequacy of human resources was acceptable, and regarding the emergency pool even remarkable, but there was important gaps in key positions, like in coordination positions in Kenya or several field staff in Dollo Ado. However, the coverage of additional support profiles has improved compared to past emergencies.

C.14. Taking into account the complexity of the operation in the Horn of Africa, a multi-country emergency with different HQs involved, the coordination and management of the communication component was more than satisfactory. Public opinion was well informed in a timely manner by a diverse palette of communication channels with no negative side effects for the missions.

C.15. Administration and logistics systems have performed well in most cases. Despite infrequent failures in the administrative control or in logistics decisions, generally the programmes have been well supported for its implementation. On the other hand, the deployment of the Emergency Pool was not always supported though additional administrative personnel.

C.16. Funds were raised on time and resource availability was in general ahead of the capacity of implementation. However, advance of private funds and bridge funds (on expected public contracts) could improve in order to ensure proper and sooner response, above all in ACF-USA missions. Communication and transparency between ACF HQs regarding fund availability and allocation have also improved should continue to be an institutional priority.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall Emergency Response

R.1. Early warning systems worked in the Horn of Africa in 2010 and 2011. The limitations came on linking them with an early response. ACF in the drought-prone countries of the Horn of Africa should reinforce their early response capacities through (1) proactively providing input to regional early warning systems, i.e. on nutrition indicators taking into account the expertise of ACF, (2) the analysis of the early warning information and (3) by linking it to locally designed early responses (contingency planning) with clear triggers within a Disaster Risk Management strategy at country level. Surveillance initiatives and experiences in Kenya and Ethiopia should be reinforced and replicated at regional level.

R.2. ACF International must continue its efforts to disseminate its Emergency Management System, which provides a log frame for integrated response among all ACF members. HQ departments should create the necessary tools for a proper implementation making sure that the system is known by all the missions. ACF must ensure that there are focal persons able to take decisions at any time, which would overcome gaps or leave of key personnel and ensure is no breakdown in communication between HQ departments.

R.3. ACF in the Horn of Africa and elsewhere should have an Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan (EPRP) at country level and when appropriate at regional level. Currently Paris and Madrid are leading the development and dissemination of the comprehensive EPRP toolkit49. Both policy documents are called to be useful tools, but still very little is in place in the missions of the Horn of Africa visited by the evaluation team. More efforts and resources need to be allocated to put those plans to work into real context. All the teams should be sensitized on the overall ACF Emergency Management System and trained to understand and participate on the EPRP.

R.4. In that frame, information on ACF resources (HR, stocks, etc.) should be updated and shared between countries on a regular basis, through the coordination of the Desks Officers in respective HQ’s in absence of any regional structure of coordination or by subrogating this responsibility to the Horn of Africa Regional Logistic Center.

R.5. Rehabilitation or development programmes in disaster-prone countries should be designed with a Switchboard to Emergency Response (SER50). That is, prepositioning specific project resources to ER and identifying activities to be switched in order to address preparedness response (in slow-onset crisis) or to address emergency response in case of disaster.

R.6. ACF country teams should be empowered in order to proactively promote and decide on preparedness and response to emergencies. At the same time, support HQs may need to adapt to the power conferred to the missions they are supporting, avoiding more exigencies than from the managing HQ.

R.7. ACF should explore the possibility of using an ACF regional coordination structure for the Horn of Africa51, dealing with early warning system and supporting country EPRPs, communication & advocacy, context analysis, and perhaps logistic or training support. For instance, the refugee crisis has an evident regional dimension that should be analysed from a regional perspective. From a technical point of view, a regular technical exchange among the four countries is encouraged.

49 Available on http://www.missions.acf.org/kitemergency/HTML_STATIC/homepageEN.html
50 For instance, USAID/OFDA and ECHO accept crisis modifiers in the normal projects through which funds up to 20% might be used for Emergency Response.
51 The Regional Logistics and Training Centres might be under the responsibility of such ACF Regional Office.
R.8. ACF still needs to work out its linking relief and development strategies more systematically, by participating in consultation forums, encouraging participation of beneficiaries and partners at all levels of the program cycle and promoting accountability. Medium and long term donors are yet to be explored in the region, with the exception of Somalia until there is an improvement in the conflict.

R.9. Accountability systems and analyses of the “do-no-harm” principle towards communities and beneficiaries needs to be reinforced to serve not only accountability purposes, but as well for monitoring and ownership purposes. Such formal feedback systems should apply from the needs assessment phase to ER implementation and exit. This is even more important where a rehabilitation / development approach is desired. ACF would benefit from reinforcing its culture and resources for monitoring, evaluation & learning at country level to increase capitalisation. This is especially important in the Somalia mission, where the Remote Management approach is in place. Remote management protocols in Somalia should be revised and reinforced, mainly through accurate monitoring indicators and triangulation. There are opportunities to increase collaboration with other organisations having similar constraints and enough experiences52.

R.10. ACF must allocate the necessary efforts and resources to define its Advocacy strategy in every country of the Horn of Africa. ACF shall aspire to influence donors, national public policy makers and public opinion. There seems to be a negative perception on advocacy from many ACF staff, while ACF, as any other humanitarian actor, can and should influence positively on policies and must communicate on root causes of humanitarian crisis. Advocacy is on the agenda for ACF International53 and ACF teams need to be provided with the tools and an understanding of implementation strategies.

Systems

R.11. The two Emergency Pools, based in Madrid and Paris, have played a major role supporting the countries involved in the Horn of Africa crisis, particularly increasing ACF capacity in the field shortly after the declaration of the famine. This effort should be properly accompanied through other support staff, since the burden on administrators and HR managers could hinder and slow down the response.

R.12. ACF must improve the conditions of service for its national senior staff (contract duration, salary scale, benefit package), above all when there is medium or long term strategy in the country and especially where capitalization and experience are critical.

R.13. The ACF Regional Training Centre has been an interesting step forward in support to ACF in-country teams in the Horn of Africa and it could provide even more opportunities. It is recommended to explore other services as technical and career support or assisting the missions to carry out individual need assessments. A national staff training plan should be put in place and so career prospects increased for valuable national staff, including preparedness and emergency response aspects.

R.14. ACF must ensure that during the first stages or peaks of an emergency response that there are no gaps in key positions by adequately using the resources available; not only the Emergency Pools but also the personnel rosters from operational and support HQ. As Haiti and Pakistan evaluations concluded, ACF teams in complex emergencies (refugees/IDP camps, insecurity contexts, etc.) need to have appropriate experience in a similar context. In slow onset crises, after the eventual Emergency Pool deployment, the second batch needs to come with a 6 month assignment, instead of repeated short deployments of only

52 Oxfam Novib-SAACID in Somalia has strengthened their remote management support by integrating elements of the Semi-Quantitative Evaluation of Access & Coverage (SQUEAC) methodology into their routine M&E systems. They even received a grant from the Humanitarian Innovation Fund (HIF).

53 ACF International Strategy 2010-2015
2-3 months, while the limits of the pool deployment should be more flexible (up to 3 months) for critical positions.

R.15. The ACF Regional Logistics Centre has proved useful to procure larger and highly standardized equipment or supplies for Kenya and Somalia and we would recommend keeping this approach in emergency situations for these two countries while national logistics systems remain in charge of smaller procurement orders. As for the Regional Training Centre, both HQs involved in the region should better coordinate between them.

R.16. When putting into practice the principles and steps of the Emergency Appeal System as part of the ACF Emergency Response Standard Operating Protocol, initial communication is crucial to clearly state the short-term strategy of the response. This should be decided by the managing HQ and should accurately identify the resources requested from each support HQ. The estimated budget in the Appeal should consider the overall emergency response in the country for a given period (3 to 6 months), clearly stating what the managing HQ calculates to rise by itself and what it may need from the other HQs, either public or private. It is even desirable to forecast any need in support due to treasury constraints, when the managing HQ is advancing bridge funds to the country.

R.17. Support HQs need to establish and apply standard mechanisms for regular communication on the funds raised, mainly on private and non-restricted funds, in order to ensure transparency and to enable managing HQs to decide resource allocation. ACF should explore an intranet system where in real-time any HQ may consult the support available from the entire network.

R.18. ACF-Somalia should keep reassessing their relationship with UN agencies and clusters in a context where the UN is not perceive at all neutral by all the actors in the country, as is doing right now. Maintaining such relations has reduced added value and may also jeopardize the principle of access.

R.19. Whilst taking into account that the communication coverage of the crisis had a great added value and has reinforced ACF International positioning, it is recommended that the communication strategy and activities are agreed by the Operations Department. On the ground, it is recommended to integrate communication teams in the ACF country teams, having one leading Communications Officer channelling the requests to ACF field teams and sharing the information with the other Communications Officers. Job descriptions of managing and support Press Officers could be revised accordingly.

R.20. ACF has been increasing the use of beneficiary testimonies and first person case studies for communications purposes and we encourage reinforcing this approach to the public and decision makers.

R.21. Communities and beneficiaries should be more involved at all stages for accountability purposes, establishing formal feedback mechanisms and informing in detail on activities, projects and future plans.

R.22. ACF International should apply its guidelines for beneficiary counting, following the necessary criteria to making sure that there is no double counting, that direct and indirect beneficiaries are properly distinguished and that not all recipients “benefit” in the same way and intensity.  

R.23. ACF funding capacity through public, private and own funds has increase, and so should the capacity to provide funding advances (bridge funds) to ensure timely starting of programmes. All ACF HQs should be in a position to advance enough funds to life saving programmes, assuming more financial risks if necessary. This is more relevant when opening new bases that involve large start-up costs (West Pokot and Dadaab).

54 For example: in Somalia it is reported more than 500,000 beneficiaries during the emergency, while in Kenya only 90,000, having more operational bases and similar budget.
R.24. In Kenya and Somalia, the support and information sharing between country coordination teams towards the field bases should be increased. In all the four countries, more information to beneficiaries on their entitlements and project work plans would contribute to better control. In Somalia, the Remote Management approaches would benefit also from such community-based monitoring using more systematic feedback systems. ACF should keep exploring the use of new communication technologies for distant monitoring in Somalia and where the beneficiaries themselves are not evidently endangered.

R.25. ACF seems to be a natural partner to work in Djibouti. Cultural links, the absence of operating partners, and the added value of being present on all the rest countries of the Horn can bring unexpected opportunities for ACF. Nevertheless, to ensure that ACF presence is meaningful, the organization needs to carefully revise its current approach in line with the country strategy.