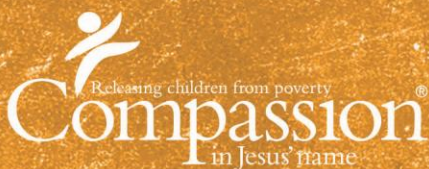




EMERGENCY FOOD SUPPORT

Six Compassion Child Development Centres,
Shone, Boditi and Wolayita Sodo, Ethiopia

Completion report for initiative ET-012289





OVERVIEW

LOCATION	Shone, Boditi and Wolayita Sodo, Ethiopia
PROJECTS	Shone Kale Heywot, Shone Muluwongel, Boditi Ketema Kaleheywot, Boditi Muluwongel, Wolayita Sodo and Sodo Kale Heywot Child Development Centres
INITIATIVE	Emergency food support
BENEFICIARIES	1,494 Compassion-assisted children and 5,976 caregivers and relatives
FUNDING	£17,098
TIMESCALE	July - November 2011

BACKGROUND

Compassion's holistic approach to child development ensures children have the opportunity to go to school, receive healthcare, food, clothing and social and emotional support. Since beginning its work in 1993, Compassion's ministry in Ethiopia has grown with more than 77,700 children being assisted through over 320 church-based projects.

Ethiopians in eastern and southern parts of the country are facing serious food shortages due to the failure of the "maher" (spring) rainfall. Compassion Ethiopia conducted a rapid assessment and found that prolonged droughts in Shone, Boditi and Wolayita Sodo are resulting in poor crop yields and a severe lack of food availability.

Local traders are being forced to import grains from other regions and the price of maize and beans has dramatically increased. Without enough produce to support local markets, the economy is suffering and many have lost their jobs and income.

Before this RESPOND initiative took place, Compassion-assisted families could not afford to buy food and were reducing their food intake and missing meals. According to Compassion Ethiopia's assessment, acute malnutrition was becoming increasingly prevalent.

INITIATIVE IMPLEMENTATION

To address these shortages, this RESPOND initiative sought to provide emergency food relief for the worst affected Compassion children and their families.

During the first stage of implementation, church leaders and Compassion staff formed a project committee to manage the sourcing and distribution of the food supplies. In order to support and boost local economies, the committee pledged to use local traders to source the maize, beans and oil.



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Once reliable suppliers had been secured, the food relief was purchased and transported to the six child development centres for storage.



Food grains being stored in a warehouse

Food being prepared for distribution at Wolayita Sodo Child Development Centre



The distribution of food was entirely managed by project staff and local volunteers. This meant that the beneficiaries were selected by local committees who were aware of those in most need. Three rounds of food distribution took place in July, August and September 2011. In each round, children and their parents received 60 kg of maize, 25-30 kg of soya beans and a litre of edible oil.

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The first stage of food distribution at Wolayita Sodo Child Development Centre



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Mothers receiving their grain at Shone Kale Heywot Child Development Centre



A father taking his food supplies home on a cart



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Children, caregivers and project staff expressing their joy at Shone Kale Heywot Child Development Centre

Taking food home at Sodo Kale Heywot Child Development Centre





The initiative was closely monitored at every stage and representatives from the project committee conducted regular visits.

As a result of careful planning and good oversight, the original budget was met and all of the planned activities were completed successfully.

IMPACT

Compassion staff, parents and caregivers commented that the food relief was timely and helped the families to survive the critical food shortages. Staff are also pleased to report that the shortages are no longer hindering the effective implementation of the project programmes. Since the completion of the initiative, all six projects report that:

- Attendance levels have been 95 per cent or higher.
- There has been a significant reduction in illness – between April – June 2011, 401 Compassion children or 26.8 per cent visited a doctor, however this has fallen to 278 or 18.6 per cent after the food provision.
- Children have higher concentration levels and more energy – the smiles have returned to their faces.

CASE STUDY



Minase enjoying a meal cooked with the grain and oil provided by the initiative

Zufan Hizekael is the mother of six year old Minase.

Before this initiative took place, Minase was badly affected by the food crisis. He came home from school sick and had little energy. Compassion staff were concerned for his health.

During late summer and autumn, the family received grain, beans and oil from their Compassion project. Zufan can now give her children the food they need. Minase has much more energy and is happily playing with his friends. Zufan gives thanks to God for the food provision.





INTERVIEWS

Interview with Abraham Worku, pastor of Wolayita Sodo Kale Hiwot Church.

Please describe how the initiative has affected the lives of people in this community.

I can say nothing except Compassion stands for the poor. I have seen real compassion in this ministry. As a church we were praying for God's intervention. There were really terrible and devastating situations in our community, especially for the children who had no one on their side (except God - Father of all). This food provision has been a biblical life rescue programme made for the children and their families.

Describe how things are different for them now that the initiative has been completed.

Wolayita Sodo, our town, was one of the productive areas in the previous years, but things have become worse and worse from year to year over the last three to five years. One of the dominant and major reasons is food shortage and irregularity in the rainfall season. Children were the prime victims during the shock. There is a primary community school in our church which the Compassion registered children are attending. These children are from the poorest of the poor families. Before the food distribution programme, the children were not playing. Now I can see them playing outside during tea break. I can see that the children are very happy and cheerful. In the past three months we had discussions with the caregivers concerning frequent absenteeism but with this initiative, those discussions have dramatically decreased.

How would you describe the impact of this work to those who made it possible?

You saved the lives of our many children and contributed a lot to the continuation of their schooling. May the Heavenly Father bless you all! As the Bible teaches us in the book of Ephesians (2:10) please keep on doing the good work until our Lord Jesus comes back.

Interview with Tadele Abule, Project Director at Sodo Kale Heywot Child Development Centre.

Please describe how the completed initiative has affected the lives of people in this community.

I am full of thanks and praises, I can't forget those challenging and terrible days. The emergency food provision was so crucial for the whole community and especially for the beneficiary children. Due to the shortage of food, with my bare eyes I saw children feeling dizziness and falling on the ground. On top of this, we had a high rate of school absenteeism. Providing food grains, nutritional cereals and edible oil during such a challenging time meant the saving of children's lives.

Describe how things are different for them now that the initiative has been completed.

During those challenging days, some of the children left the school to collect scrap food at the local market. The rest spent their time carrying goods in the same market. All these and other daily activities told us children spent their valuable time out of school. As a church leader we were facing a big challenge and we were tired of entertaining the complaints of parents regarding the food shortage. Though we could do something little, our church didn't have much income as many of our members





are the poorest of the poor. Thus, the support was very timely and based on our beneficiaries' needs.

Anyone in my position could say nothing except praise God and bless those who made the initiative possible with their treasury. God is good and knows how to sustain the poor.

How would you describe the impact of this work to those who made it possible?

Again, I want to praise God for His provision to these children and the whole church community. This emergency food provision has enabled us to minister to children by keeping them healthy. Lastly, representing the whole community in our church, especially children and their caregivers, I thank Compassion so much and may the Lord bless all who contributed on this matter.

Interview with Samuel Fanta, Project Director at Boditi Ketema Kaleheywot Child Development Centre.

Please describe how the work has affected the lives of people in this community.

As a Project Director, it is heartbreaking to see children coming to the project centre without food - being starved. We passed through harsh times, we tried to share what we had but the problem was huge. Project activities were also affected for most of the children were absent. Our health worker was busy with taking children to the health centre. The project could not teach children. Now all these difficulties have gone with the emergency food aid. The initiative made cheerful families at household level.

Describe how things are different for them now that the initiative has been completed.

Beneficiary children are now attending school and project activities and they are physically healthy and playing in most of their spare time. I observe them being happy with this provision, for they have something to eat at home, after school or at the project. All the church members are happy to see the support saved the lives of children.

How would you describe the impact of this work to those who made it possible?

May God bless all who contributed a lot to the achievement of this great work. Their support helped us in overcoming our enemy - poverty.

Interview with Woro Heramo, mother of Compassion child Bereket Daniel.

Please tell me your name, the names of those living in your household, and how long you have lived in this community.

My name is Woro Heramo, mother of Bereket Daniel. We are eight in the family including my husband. My children's names are Bereket, Mihiretu, Fikru, Godancho and the only daughter Yemisirach. I was born in Shone town and also gave birth to all my children here.

How needy were you before this support was availed?

Really, it was God's intervention because I was a pregnant with my last son, Godancho, when the initiative was made. You can imagine how bad the situation was when I had almost nothing to





feed my children and being pregnant. As a mother, I was really in a traumatic situation. I had nothing to feed my children.

How did this support contribute to your immediate need?

The emergency food support definitely answered my immediate need. Now the heavy burden is taken away from me.

What implication does this have on your children?

Let me start with my last son, Godancho. The name means 'the rich one' in our vernacular language. I think it means a lot about the after initiative situation. My husband and I were very happy for the food provision during his birth.

How would you describe the contribution of this support to those who made it possible?

May our Heavenly Father bless those who brought the support to our home and their whole families!

Interview with Abaynesh Gova, mother of Compassion child Eyerusalem Petros.

Please tell me your name, the names of those living in your household, and how long you have lived in this community.

My name is Abaynesh Gova, mother of Eyerusalem Petros. My family has five members. Petros (my husband), a son Natnael and two daughters Eyerusalem and Fikirte. I was born and have been living here in Boditi.

How needy were you before this support was availed?

My family was critically in need of food support. During those challenging months my family ate a maximum of twice a day. It was also a small amount and the same food item - maize. I remember the days when I sent my children to school without feeding them. Especially, my daughter, Eyerusalem, went to school many days without eating breakfast.

How does this support contribute to your immediate need?

The food support fully helped me to get relief from such kinds of pains and worries. Now we are able to feed our children three times a day. Such opportunities would not have been possible without such support.

What implication does this have on your children?

In our village, malaria is a major health problem that made people sick and stay in bed. Children are in the front line to be the victims of any problems in our village, including the food shortage. This initiative through food grain, nutritional cereals and edible oil kept our children away from frequent doctor visitations and malaria attacks. The whole family is now healthy with the support made in the previous four months.





How would you describe the contribution of this support to those who made it possible?

I pray for the Lord to bless those who stood by our side.

Interview with Lodamo Delabo, father of Compassion child Degu Lodamo.

Please tell me your name, the names of those living in your household, and how long you have lived in this community.

My name is Lodamo Delabo, father of Degu Lodamo. My family has eleven members - Tadilech (my wife), and eight sons - Admasu, Abera, Habtamu, Getiso, Aclilu, Mulatu, Wendu and Degu. The name of our only daughter is Amarech. I was born here in Shone and now I am in my late 40s.

How needy were you before this support was availed?

As a father it was a very difficult situation for me to manage all these children with meagre and impermanent household income. Each day survival was a struggle and I was made to do all available daily labour works to win bread for my children. I and my wife spent many nights without having dinner after sharing a handful amount to our kids. Even I was tempted to beg on the roadside though it is embarrassing for me in our culture. I am wondering how the situation was very challenging for me and my family. No doubt about it, my family was in danger and in need of the support. We could not afford to eat; my six year-old daughter Amarech was in a critical situation

How did this support contribute to your immediate need?

In addition to what I brought from my daily labour, the support made it possible to save the lives of my children.

What implication did this have on your children?

The support helped my children to attend Compassion project programmes and school.

How would you describe the contribution of this support to those who made it possible?

May God bless all you who supported us in food aid programme.

THANK YOU

On behalf of the children and families who have benefited from this RESPOND initiative, thank you for your generosity.

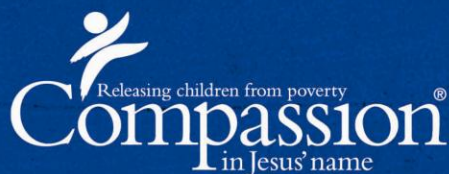
Thanks to your help, severe cases of malnutrition have been prevented and children's lives have been saved. The food distribution has been a powerful witness to communities and Compassion's church partners send their sincere appreciation.





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