



# Addressing Diverse and Acute Primary Threats (ADAPT II) to Human Security in Borno

## Food Security Lesson Learned

(Bama and Damboa LGA)

April, 2023



# Methodology



- Qualitative study combining key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and field observations
- Data collection period: 7<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> November 2022
- Locations: Damboa and Bama
- KIIs
  - vendors/non-vendors
  - participants/non-participant
  - community leaders
- Focus groups
  - 8 participant groups (4 male, 4 female)
  - 8 non-participant groups (4 male, 4 female)

# Food Security Activity

## Overview

- The unconditional food vouchers intervention has reached 6,810 households direct program participants that translated to over 64,220 indirect program participants (42% male and 58% female) in Bama and Damboa with a monthly food ration over the period of the program.
- From the 6,810 households, a total of 2,210 households were supported with Agriculture assistance as the program promotes household poultry production and kitchen gardening using the SMART agronomy concept to encourage dietary diversification at the household level.
- Mercy Corps distributed 2,042 locally made energy efficient fuel stoves to female-headed households.
- 4,600 households a subset of the 6,810 households targeted for staple food were also provided with e-wallets for vegetables, fruits and animal proteins to enable them have diet diversification at household level.



# Participants Registration

Community Based targeting approach

Capturing of biometric

Feedbacks on registration

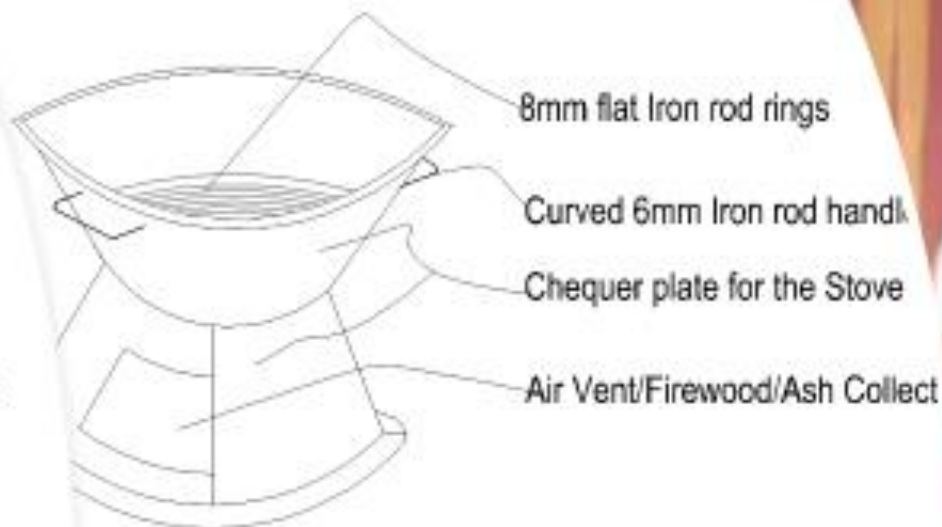
Pairing of Households

Sharing of food items with community leader or member

Giving favors to community leaders before they include community members names

## Fuel Efficient Stove

- Safe Access to Fuel Energy is an NFI package provided to support Shelter and/or Food Security Participants. It's an efficient cooking equipment aimed at allowing less consumption of charcoal while emitting less or no black carbon soot, thereby ensuring maintenance of neat cooking pots and reduced searching of firewood to prevent risk of kidnapping and/or abduction at the bush.



# Agricultural Assistance (Kitchen Gardening)

The program promoted climate and nutrition sensitive farming to foster year-round backyard production of selected vegetables and fruits using mainly the permagardening method.



## Activities under Kitchen Gardening

- Establish demonstration plots
- Seed purity, viability, germination tests and seed certification
- Distribution of seeds and tools inputs (e-voucher)
- Pest Management
- Post harvest handling
- Post Supply Monitoring



# Agricultural Assistance (Poultry Production)

Mercy Corps' poultry models train participants to raise poultry and integrate with other value chain actors, providing inputs, skills and opportunities to increase access to animal protein and fresh foods has helped some households achieve self-sufficiency.

- Poultry participants received 10 (five weeks old noiler birds), 2 bags of 25kg Amo feeds as well as a feeder and drinker
- The birds fully vaccinated before given to participants to avoid an outbreak of diseases
- The participants were grouped according to their communities and group leaders were selected among the participants to ease communication
- The group leaders were trained by Mercy Corps staff on poultry production and management while the step-down training was done for the participants by village agents and their group leaders



- As of last month 60%, of the birds have started laying eggs**

- Some participants diversified their farm by selling some of their birds to buy goats or other IGA**

# Participants Perceptions

---

- *The monthly food provision by MC has greatly impacted my life and that of my family. We are more financially stable now. I only use the profit from my business to buy other households items like fuel, medication and transport. Lawan Bukar from Damboa*
- *I feel so happy and excited of being a participant. Before the intervention, I looked malnourished and sick, but I now look healthy and agile because of the constant flow of food. Hauwa Mohammed from Damboa*
- *Through MC's monthly assistance of dry, fresh, and fleshy food baskets, it's no longer a question of "what food would we eat today" but "what variety of food do we wish to eat today". We now live a food balanced and healthy life with no more rationing. One of the FFV participants, Habu Bulbul from Damboa*
- *I used to go two months without having meat in my meal, but things have changed since I was selected as participants for MC food assistance (fleshy food). An FFV participant, Ali Umar from Bama LGA*
- *The little money I was supposed to use for feeding has been channeled to the purchase of a goat and few chickens. I have started groundnut business and it is thriving. Fatima Musa from Bama*



# Community Leaders perceptions

---

They are all happy with what MC is doing in their communities

## **Food Voucher Assistance approach**

- It is good because one has right to his card and they ensure the card is with the owner
- It is good because it has educated and enlightened us about an advancement in technology. It has also reduced the risk of theft
- It is a good medium and it is safer

## **Impact on MC Vendors**

- It is helping them because it has taught them to sell good food items because that is MC standard, and it has boosted their business.
- They mention the through MC implementation these vendors have been able to establish themselves legally and in the market space
- Vendors often get their pay earlier with MC and this money can be used for other investments and personal use

# Did the program cause any safety or security problems for your community

## Participants view

- *No, it didn't affect our safety or security situations because it's a channel of quenching hunger which is entirely not related to lack of safety and anyone trying to support with food is believed to give life*
- *The intervention has never posed any challenge to the community rather It is an intervention that is mitigating a challenge that might escalate to harm*

## Community Leaders

- *The only aspect I see the aforementioned is during the capturing and selection of participants by the Bulama as this stir up minds and makes many angry or sad.*
- *There is much hatred between individuals when they are not captured within the same community.*
- *Regarding this, there is no safety or security concerns*

# Did you experience any challenges or delays during redemptions

## Participants view

- Few beneficiaries mention having card related issues like zero balance, damage cards or fingerprints error.
- Few also mentioned spending almost an hour on the queue before redeeming their entitlement

## From vendors

- *I have never experienced any difficulty in the redemption process, everything is going on fine and as agreed on the contract*
- Card related issues from few participants

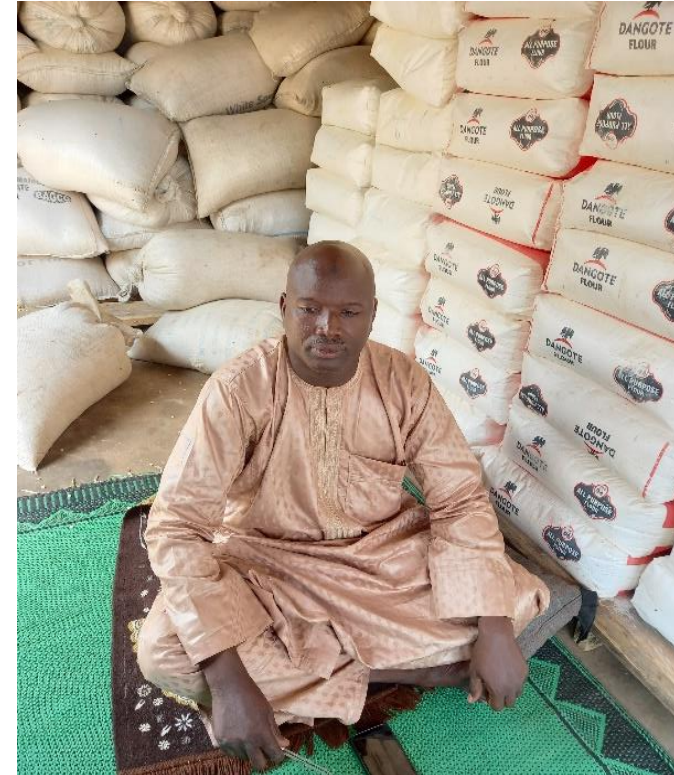


# Vendor Perceptions

The vendors expressed great joy for being part of the program

*We have a good working relationship with staff and participants*

- As for impact, through the vendorship, I was able to increase the number of rooms in my house from 2 to 5 for comfortability of my family and I also enrolled my children in school.*
- I was able to build a house for my family and feed them adequately.*
- I was able to send one of my wives to further her studies.*
- Buying some of the food items from other suppliers in Bama and Damboa*
- Engaging women in cleaning some of the food items*
- Vendors hired young men to help during food redemption.*



# GRINDING VENDORS

---

- We Grind Maize, Sorghum, Millet, Rice (threshing)
- Grinding a Mudu cost around 30-40NGN
- *On non-MC redemption days, we make around NGN4,000-6,000 daily and lots of our customers are participants benefiting in the MC food assistance intervention*
- They make around 12500NGN - 15,000NGN equivalent to 250- 300 Mudus
- *With the return of MC food redemption there has been massive increase in my workload, During voucher redemption days my machines are never idle and never stopped working until the cycle is over due to the massive customer services I rendered.*



# Non-Vendor/Non-Participant Perceptions

Although non-beneficiaries interviewed reported wishing that they were also beneficiaries, all non-beneficiaries confirm that the food intervention greatly impact the people of Bama & Damboa, and some non-beneficiaries also reported that their friends and neighbors shared these food items redeemed and farm produced with them and that they are happy the activity occurred.



Sales went down during the redemption weeks for all non-vendors



Prices of food items tend to reduce in Bama and increase in Damboa during redemption



Sales returned to normal once the redemption ended

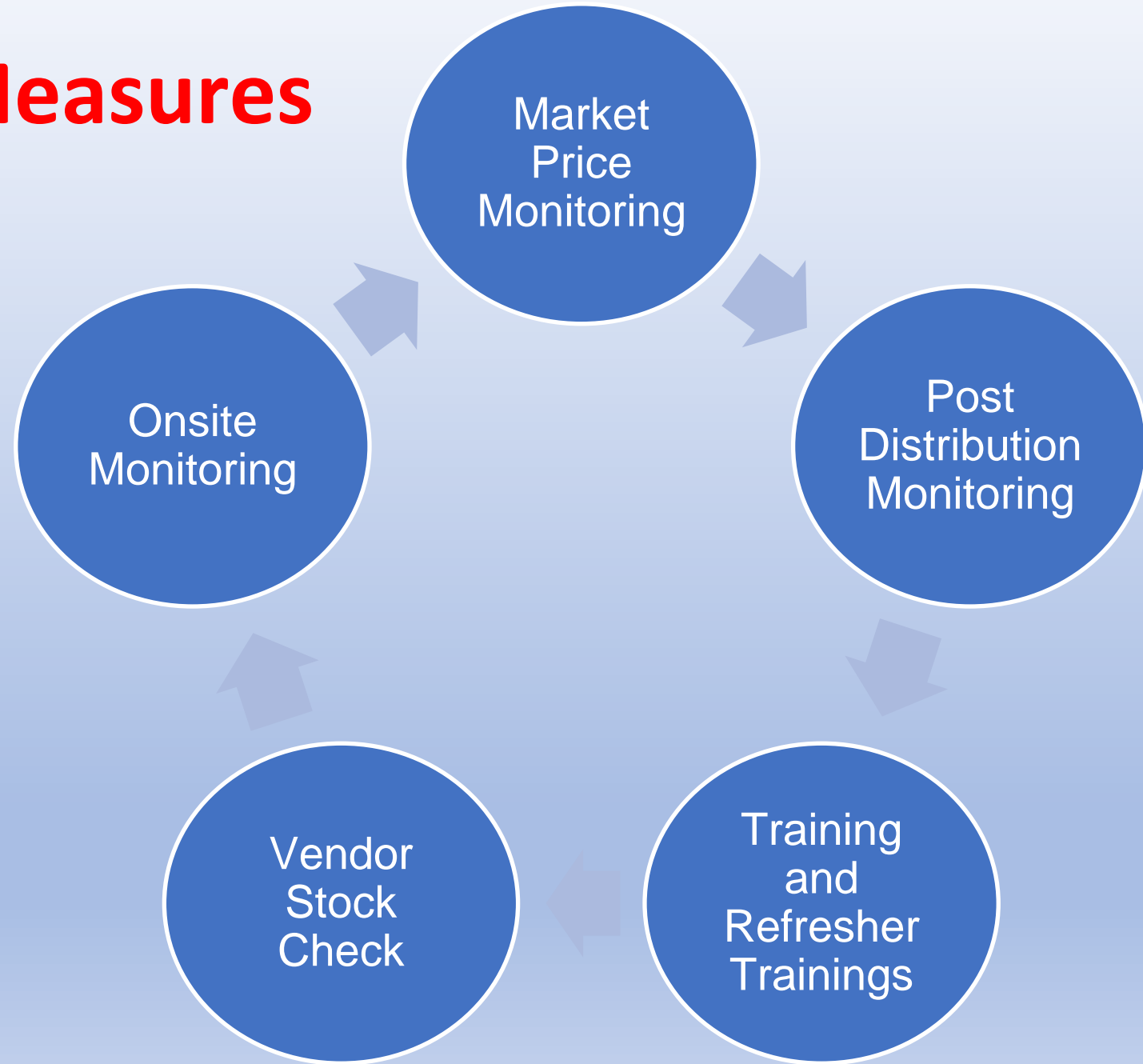


*The program did not cause any safety or security problems that we know of rather cases of Burglary reduced*



When ever MC vendors put on a request, 100% of my commodities goes to them which is usually not enough to meet their demand

# Quality Control Measures



# Challenges

- ❖ **Biometrics failure:** For those participants having challenge with biometrics, we can either recapture prints or issue out PIN to participants.
- ❖ **Limitation of manpower** specific to food security, therefore more hands should be available for support
- ❖ Transaction monitors/village agents stipends is small
- ❖ **Inflation of food prices** which also affects the availability of food commodity, there should be a need to review the prices of food items.

- ❖ **Issues relating to participants cards** such as zero balance and non-detection of cards by the device.
- ❖ **Faults from the scanners**
- ❖ **Inclusion and exclusion error**
- ❖ **The perishability of food items** makes some of the fresh foods deteriorate even before the end of the redemption.
- ❖ Household pairing to one E-voucher



# Lessons Learned



- Introduction of FA transaction monitoring has improved the quality of food redemption
- Regular monitoring of participants by village agents has greatly impacted on good practices resulting in increased yield.
- Community by Community top-up/multiple vendor engagement
- Biometrics voucher redemption which allow only primary or proxy alone the access to redeem their food commodity thereby controlling theft.
- A regular distribution pattern for every month
- Promoting and supporting the good hygiene practices of the food particularly the fleshy, freshy food and vegetables.
- Timely vendors reconciliation which leads to prompt payments.
- E-voucher coloration to show the sets of participants



# Key Recommendations

---

1. Consistent monitoring of redemptions
2. Vendors need to be sensitized to know that they should sell to everyone – open market
3. Strengthen sensitization and mobilization before each redemption
4. Redesigning registration/retargeting process (community leaders' power should be limited during registration)
5. Nagis platform provider to improve on biometric system
6. Participants picture on E-voucher
7. Inclusion of protection team in onsite monitors
8. Verifying MEL food prices before negotiations



**Thank you!**