

# Mid Term Review of DIZA Project

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## List of acronyms

ACRA	ACRA Foundation, Association of Rural Cooperation en Afrique
ADC	Cantonal Development Associations
AFD	French Development Agency
AJRPS	Young People's Association for The Renewal and Progress of Salamat
APLFT	Association for the Promotion of Fundamental Freedoms in Chad
ATURAD	Association of Emergency Witnesses and Development Actions
CCU	Consortium Coordination Unit
CDA	Departmental Action Committee
CFW	Cash for Work
CRM	Complaints Response Mechanism
CRV	Village Accountability Committee
CT	Cash Transfers
DIZA	Inclusive Development of Home Zones
EU	European Union
EUTF	European Union Emergency Trust Fund
FLM	World Lutheran Federation
HCR	The United Nations Refugee Agency
IGA	Income Generating Activity
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LDP	Local Development Plan
PDM	Post Distribution Monitoring
SNPS	National Social Protection Strategy

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## Executive Summary

This midterm evaluation of the DIZA-Est programme was conducted remotely using online interviews with partner staff and an anonymous online survey, as well as document and quantitative data review, to gain insight into 4 evaluation questions relating to Partnership; Protection; Sustainability and Efficiency of the DIZA-Est Programme to date. A synopsis of findings and conclusions in relation to each question is given below:

### **Partnership -Was sufficient support given to all implementation partners to allow them to implement the programme in a timely manner?**

Partnership is an integral aspect of this programme, given the Consortium model used and the structure of having an international partner working closely with a local organisation in every province.

Despite initial difficulties in establishing the consortium, aligning different organisational ways of working and building provincial partnerships between local and international organisations, it is evident that the Consortium partners are now working well together.

Since the Consortium Coordination Unit (CCU) became fully functional with a full team in January 2020, the support has been consistent, detailed and well appreciated by partners. Implementation guides for key activities have been finalised and rolled out to partners. The Consortium Committees have been established and are regularly meeting. The CCU are undertaking reasonable regular monitoring visits to each of the provinces (although access to Salamat has been curtailed).

The local organisations have benefited from the experience and capacity of their international partners, as well as from the ongoing support and guidance from the CCU. There have been clear areas of progress for many organisations from implementing standard policies on staff behaviour and Code of Conduct, to rolling out comprehensive Complaints Response Mechanisms for the first time; as well as improved technical capacity in key activities such as Cash distributions and accompanying monitoring mechanisms of PDMs.

The initial planning and start-up phase necessitated a close accompaniment and structured support to all partners by the CCU – this was perceived by some in the consortium as being “heavy” and prohibitive, with mention by some of “micro management”. As the consortium now moves into an intense phase of implementation, that support should evolve to be more facilitative (from the previous directive approach) with a focus on ensuring implementation of activities in a timely manner.

Another area to strengthen in the capacity building aspect of the Consortium. Partnerships are so far very focused on the programme implementation and related mechanisms. It would also be useful for a clear capacity building plan to be agreed between partners so that the full benefit of the partnerships could be realised over the final two years of the programme.

### **Protection - How have the protection principles of access, security, participation and accountability been have into account?**

Security is a primary consideration in activity planning for all staff, and it is a dedicated topic in committee meetings. Monitoring this aspect is done through Post Distribution Monitoring as well as through engagement with communities through Village Accountability Committees (CRVs). Existing data shows few instances of security issues being raised through PDMs. There was a disparity in the opinions of staff in different provinces with regards to the prioritisation of security of beneficiaries at all times, with staff in Ouaddai not as confident of this prioritisation. This should be investigated further.

There has been widespread and consistent engagement with beneficiaries through the programme to date. Data from Post Distribution Monitoring shows a positive trend in beneficiary engagement over the past 9 months from seeds and tools PDM to Cash PDM. There has been a lot of emphasis on setting up a comprehensive CRM system with Freephone number (Green line), complaints boxes and awareness raising in each province. However these systems are at different stages of development with different partners and it will be necessary to ensure those organisations lagging behind are supported to ensure their CRM system is fully functional as soon as possible. This is critical to ensure protection of beneficiaries and giving them a mechanism to communicate complaints and concerns quickly and easily. There was some inconsistent data from beneficiaries in Ouaddai in relation to awareness of different CRM mechanisms, with awareness seeming to have decreased between August 2020 and March 2021 – this should be followed up to see why this is the case.

The focus of the programme is very much on ensuring access of the most vulnerable to the programme and the comprehensive targeting exercise is deemed to have successfully identified the most vulnerable people in target communities. There have been very few complaints in relation to targeting and the majority of staff opinion through survey and interviews agrees that the most vulnerable have access to all programme activities. However, a dissenting view was expressed, that the targeting survey, by setting arbitrary thresholds and weightings to specific indicators, excluded some extremely poor and vulnerable by the fact of not fulfilling a single arbitrary criteria at a specific moment in time. The consortium did do community validation exercises to guard against such situations, but this worry is valid in communities where the majority of people are living in poverty.

### **Sustainability - Acceptable performance but with some shortcomings**

Elements of sustainability are well considered and planned for in project documents, and it is evident that the premise of DIZA is on supporting both immediate need through cash as well as building financial capacity and livelihoods of beneficiaries to ensure the initial injection of cash is sustained well beyond the life time of the programme. However the programme is very complex, and there are doubts as to whether it can be implemented in its entirety in the time remaining.

To succeed in creating long term change, it is imperative that the programme logic is adhered to that key priority activities are implemented as planned. The fact that the key activities of cash distribution and cash for work have just started in the third year of the project, and consequently the support activities that lie behind these big budget activities are delayed is a severe threat to the sustainability of the programme. Revision of workplans to focus on the most key activities in the logic chain towards sustainable change is key at this stage.

A risk matrix should also be developed, considering potential threats to the smooth implementation of these key activities over the next 18 months and mitigation plans made to ensure continued implementation should those risks be realised.

### **Efficiency - Barely acceptable performance with a number of major shortcomings (require remedial action)**

Efficiency has been evaluated in terms of the use of finances, time and resources thus far in the programme.

The under expenditure on concrete programme activities compared to on track spending on HR, equipment and running costs is indicative of the inefficiencies in this programme. The fact that at the end of Year 2 only 10% of the activities budget had been spent (and a third of that was on the targeting survey) is worrying, and if a value for money assessment was to be made at this time, the findings would show very little in this regard. However it is acknowledged that an intense period of expenditure is imminent with planned cash distributions and intensification of cash for work projects. None the less, a huge push to carry out planned activities must be made in the time remaining.

Consortia are inefficient by design, and the DIZA consortium is no exception. Partners all described the “heaviness” of the consortium, highlighting how slow it was to get started, the slowness of reaching consensus and the layers of

approval from local partner all the way up to consortium lead. The complexity of the programme also led to a slow start with a lot of planning, consultation and coordination necessary before programme activities could take place. The targeting exercise in particular was very complex and detailed and the time taken from geographic targeting to beneficiaries registration (1.5 years) is just one illustration of the slow start up of this programme, that had contributed to a low score on this domain.

The efficiencies of current staff structures also have to be questioned, as it is obvious that current levels of field animators are not sufficient to adequately implement such a complex programme. Redesign of this element of the budget and HR structure (in line with a revised activity plan) will have to be considered to be able to achieve programme results in remaining time period.

The targeting approach itself can also be argued to be inefficient. Although it is acknowledged that the process was driven by the requirement to provide information to the RSU, applying a scientific approach to a social issues, while transparent, can be inefficient and there are probably cheaper ways to obtain the same results. A participative targeting approach, much like the verification exercise conducted as the second part of the targeting processes, could have been used to identify the most vulnerable through community consultation rather than collecting a huge amount of data from a huge amount of people with questions over whether it will ever actually be used. This question (due to the lack of engagement from the RSU on how they are using the data) could be the biggest inefficiency of the entire programme – because however inefficient the process of data collection may have been, if the data is not used at the end then the inefficiencies are increased exponentially.

## Scoring

In summary this evaluation assigns the following scores to the four evaluation questions:

<b>Partnership</b> : Was sufficient support given to all implementation partners to allow them to implement the programme in a timely manner?	<b>3 - Good overall performance (as expected)</b>
<b>Protection</b> : How have the protection principles of access, security, participation and accountability been have into account?	<b>3 - Good overall performance (as expected)</b>
<b>Sustainability</b> : To what extent has the programme been implemented in a sustainable manner? Can measures be taken to improve this aspect of implementation?	<b>2- Acceptable performance but with some shortcomings</b>
<b>Efficiency</b> : Have resources been used well? Could things have been done differently and how?	<b>1 - Barely acceptable performance with a number of major shortcomings (require remedial action)</b>

## Section 1: Introduction

The DIZA programme in Eastern Chad (DIZA-EST) aims to improve the living conditions and resilience of indigenous, refugee and returnee populations in host areas, through support for inclusive local development in order to minimise the factors contributing to inter-community tensions, instability and the risk of increased forced displacement and conflict.

The programme is funded through the EU and AFD with the initial contract with the EU signed in November 2018 for a duration of three years (to Nov 2021). A contract for further financing from AFD was signed in February 2020 which extended the programme by an additional 12 months to Nov 2022.

The programme is being implemented by a Consortium led by Concern Worldwide. The members of this consortium are:

- Lutheran World Federation and l'Association des Témoins d'Urgences et des Actions de Développement (ATURAD) in the Ouaddaï Province
- Concern Worldwide and l'Association pour la Promotion des Libertés Fondamentales au Tchad (APLFT) in the province of Sila
- Fondazione ACRA and l'Association des Jeunes pour le Progrès et le Renouveau du Salamat (AJRPS) in the province of Salamat

There are 9 Expected Results:

1. Improved access to social protection mechanisms and basic services for the most vulnerable people;
2. Essential community services are built or rehabilitated through Cash for Work;
3. Community investment funds are created for the operation and maintenance of essential community services;
4. Access to microcredit is promoted and beneficiaries are coached in its management;
5. The value chain approach and natural resource management is promoted in the target areas;
6. Measures and actions to support the vocational and technical training of young people and women in vulnerable situations are developed;
7. Capacity building of populations, local authorities and stakeholders is strengthened in the planning of development initiatives, participatory management and accountability, including local finance;
8. Cultural exchanges between communities are promoted to consolidate peace and strengthen social cohesion;
9. The rights of refugees are promoted through the adoption of the asylum law, obtaining freedom of movement and settlement, professional freedom, documentation and legal status securing investment and access to land.

## Section 2: Evaluation Objectives and Questions

The objective of this midterm review as defined by the Terms of Reference (see Annex 1) is to objectively evaluate the implementation of the DIZA programme to date in the context of four key areas:

- **Partnership:** Was sufficient support given to all implementation partners to allow them to implement the programme in a timely manner?
- **Protection:** How have the protection principles of access, security, participation and accountability been have into account?
- **Sustainability:** To what extent has the programme been implemented in a sustainable manner? Can measures be taken to improve this aspect of implementation?
- **Efficiency:** Have resources been used well? Could things have been done differently and how?

The results of the midterm evaluation will allow the identification of key lessons to date and will give partners the necessary knowledge to reflect on adaptations and modification that can improve the programme, specifically in the aforementioned areas.

### Section 3: Methodology

The planned methodology as per the Terms of Reference for this midterm evaluation was a mixed methods approach combining review of secondary information, quantitative analysis of existing monitoring data, combined with Key informant Interviews (KIIs) with staff from all six partner organisations and primary data collection at field level through focus groups and interviews with beneficiary representatives and local authorities (Departmental Action Committee (CDA) and traditional leaders (Chef de Canton).

Unfortunately the evaluation coincided with the untimely death of President Idriss Déby and the subsequent period of unrest prevented field level data collection from taking place. Remote interviews with senior partner staff were still carried out, and an additional online survey for staff at all levels was also done to ensure a field perspective was included in this evaluation. A more detailed analysis of all existing quantitative beneficiary data was also carried out to ensure the beneficiary perspective is covered as much as possible given the existing context.

There were 38 responses to the partner staff questionnaire that was circulated online (full survey available in Annex 4). Eighteen responses were from staff in Sila, while there were ten staff who submitted a response in both Ouaddai and Salamat.

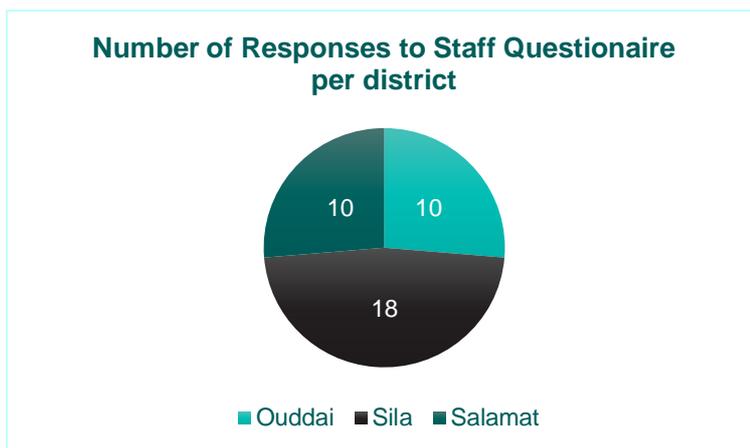


Fig. 1: Distribution of staff responses per province

The views of 25 animators (field level staff) were included in this questionnaire, which is really useful especially in the context of a remote evaluation. Eight women participated – five of these women were staff at field level, while the remaining 3 were at Head of Programme, Coordinator and Programme support level.

Fourteen key informants were selected using convenient and purposive sampling. The below graph gives an overview of distribution of Key Informant per organisation while the full list of Key Informants can be found in the Annex 2.

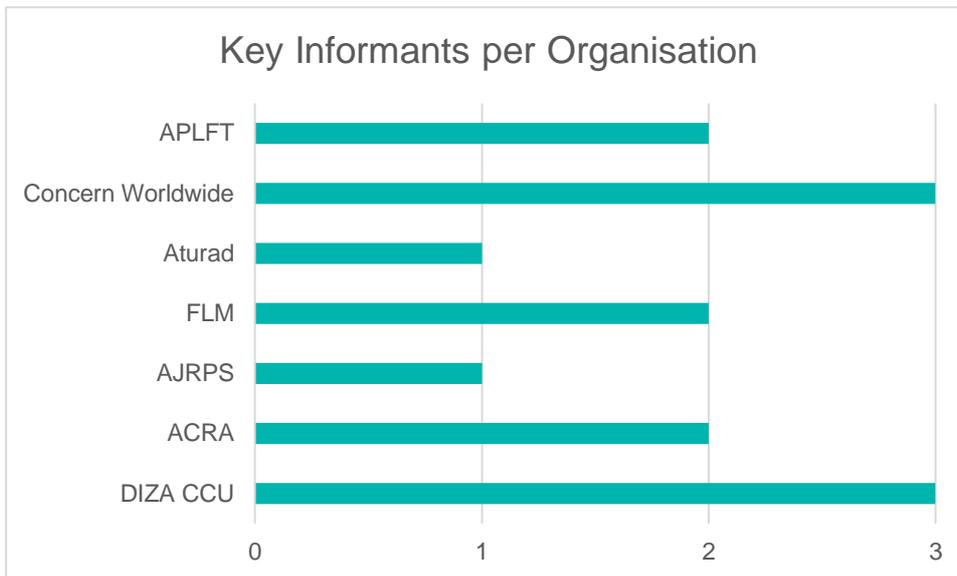


Fig. 2: Number of Key Informants per organisation

It should be noted that this evaluation was conducted by the Senior Programme Approaches and Learning Advisor from Concern’s Headquarters in Dublin. This person is not involved in the design or implementation of the DIZA programme and as such is entirely independent from the programme and can offer an unbiased evaluation of the key evaluation questions at this midterm point.

## Section 4: Limitations

There were many limitations to this evaluation, some foreseen and others unexpected.

Due to the on-going COVID pandemic, it was decided from the outset that this evaluation would be conducted remotely by an evaluator based in Concern’s head office. This has obvious drawbacks as the evaluator has never been to Chad so is unfamiliar with the specific context. It also means all interviews with partner staff was conducted remotely – which although still valuable, does not allow the informal exchanges that often yield a lot of learning in a face to face situation

The remote interviews with partner staff were to be complemented by primary data from beneficiaries and representatives of local authorities, collected by colleagues from the DIZA-Sud programme. Tools to support this field level data collected were developed in the first week of the evaluation. Unfortunately unforeseen political events at the start of this evaluation prevented any field level data collection. Not having beneficiary feedback and perspectives in this evaluation is a significant limitation. However, in depth analysis of all data collected thus far from beneficiaries (specifically through post distribution monitoring of seeds and tools distributions, unconditional cash and cash for work) has allowed beneficiaries perspectives to be included. Having easy access to this data on Concern DDG system has been extremely useful in this regard.

The political and security situation in Chad also had an impact on other planned activities and scheduling in this evaluation. The initial introductory meeting with partners which included a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis and other participative ranking exercises was cancelled. Staff were obviously very preoccupied with the ongoing situation so timelines had to be adjusted. However it should be noted that Key Informants were very willing to make themselves available for this evaluation, even those who had been evacuated from Chad as a precautionary measure. This is highly appreciated by the evaluator.

## Section 5: Findings

### Partnership

An important aspect of the DIZA programme is partnership. Partnership exists at multiple levels- between the six organisations participating in the consortium; between the participating organisations and the Consortium Coordination Unit; between the local and international partner implementing together in each of the three provinces, and between the DIZA Consortium and UNHCR. Developing and cultivating these partnerships has been a huge part of the programme to date, and the coordination and communication required should not be overlooked.

- **Local and international partners**

The partnership between local and international NGOs is referenced very briefly in the initial proposal (“the presence of local co-applicants enables the action to strengthen the capacities of local NGOs”). However this is a very important and unique aspect of this programme that builds on the localization agenda and really contributes to the potential for sustainability of the programme.

The structure of each partnership and the roles and responsibilities therein deviate between each province.

**In Sila**, Concern Worldwide partners with APLFT, a local NGO specializing in Protection and Human Rights. The DIZA project is the first time that these two organizations have worked together. APLFT lead on the implementation of all DIZA activities with technical support from Concern. However this model has drawbacks, where there is a perception that Concern Worldwide sometime prioritize their own activities. Having said that capacity building opportunities are well appreciated. Developing a new working relationship in the context of such a large project has not been without challenges and frequent staff turnover at the international NGO level has prolonged this initial period of building trust and normalizing ways of working. However there has been huge improvements on this side, to the point where both NGOs are looking for funding opportunities to allow continued collaboration. A very important step for the relationship between the two organizations was the development of a “manual of collaboration” which documented clearly reporting and communication lines and clarified the intricacies of how the partners would work together on a daily basis. The APLFT field teams of 12 animators (3 per canton with a minimum of 1 woman per canton) are striving forward in terms of implementation of activities.

**In Salamat**, international NGO ACRA partners with local partner AJRPS. Again the DIZA project is the first time these organizations have partnered together. However they have already submitted another joint proposal to the EU. The work is divided by department, with field staff from each organizations implementing in different departments. Both partners report that a good working relationship has been established, despite initial challenges, however it should be noted that there is no fixed meeting schedule and the details of the partnership are less formalised than in the case of Concern and APLFT.

**In Ouaddai**, FLM and ATURAD have partnered to implement DIZA programme dividing the work geographically. In contrast to the other partnerships, the two are long term partners and have a good structured relationship. Animators from specific organisations cover all activities in their specific canton and are responsible for facilitation and communication. However as ATURAD lack technical expertise, FLM support from a technical perspective across all cantons.

Overall the local NGOs value the opportunity to work with an international NGO to build their capacity and to learn from the experience of these large organizations. There were no complaints about the relationship between the different NGOs. However it should be noted that in Ouaddai the offices of the partners are substantial distanced from each other, preventing frequent face to face interaction. It was also noted by one local partner that capacity building is not at all formalized - capacity building is very much at the implementation level and related to DIZA activities, whereas the partner requested more strategic level capacity building in terms of Programme management and financial management.

It was also noted that animators' communication is very much vertical with little communication between animators from different organizations. Even at other levels of the organization, the view was that communication is to the CCU and not necessarily between staff from different organizations and that this was a missed opportunity for learning. This is despite the existence of plethora of committees – however these committees are for senior level staff with field level staff having little opportunity to interact.

Another challenge across all implementing partners is the lack of women staff, especially at field level. Although this was not voiced as a major concern by any key informant and it is acknowledged that recruiting quality women staff in a context such as Chad will always be challenging, it is still worth highlighting this challenge and advocating for innovative solutions to be put forward in order to ensure confident participation of this vulnerable section of society.

Another aspect revealed in this review is the increased complexity of supporting a local partner in the context of a consortium where there is also a relationship between the local partner and the consortium lead via the CCU. This partnership triangle adds a new dimension to the previous linear relationship between local and international partner, and was highlighted as an additional challenge that organizations had to contend with.

- **Working in a Consortium**

The overwhelming word used when partners talked about the DIZA consortium is “lourd” (heavy). The partners all acknowledged the slow nature of working in consortium and the delays that have ensued especially in the first two years of the programme. Lots of people of different nationalities, different ways of working, lack of standardisation, recruitment challenges were all mentioned as causing difficulties and delays during the first two years. In addition, reaching a consensus on various technical issues in such a large consortium has been time consuming.

Working in consortia is a relatively new way of working in Chad and this has definitely contributed to the slowness of this DIZA consortium, especially in the first year of the project, as the partner organisations defined and adjusted to new ways of working. It was very unfortunate that a full Consortium Coordination Unit (CCU) team was not in place until over a year into the programme (January 2020), and it is very clear that having this team in place improved both relationships and the rate of implementation.

It was also clear that partners were still adjusting to having standardised approaches in the context of a consortium, and there were definite feelings of frustration of not having the autonomy to implement along their own timelines and standards.

Despite these challenges, 92% of DIZA staff who responded to the anonymous survey acknowledged that the quality of their programming had improved due to being members of a consortium. Similarly 92% said that competencies of the staff involved from their organisation had improved. All field animators supported this view of the experience of working as part of the DIZA consortium.

Likewise the majority of interviewees confirmed that harmonised approaches and ways of working is having a positive impact on programme quality and that partner organisations are using new skills and learning from the best practises of others. Partners were also appreciative of the role of the CCU in shielding consortium members from the administrative demands of the donors, and especially for leading the negotiation for additional funding with AFD.

Only 2 respondents to the survey were unaware of the work of the CCU – a logistician and a field animator. However that the majority of respondents, including field staff are aware is a positive finding.

Perceptions of the CCU as expressed by DIZA staff in the anonymous survey are also positive. The vast majority of respondents consider that the overall quality, communication, usefulness and timeliness of support provided by the CCU as being either “excellent” or “good”. One quarter expressed some level of dissatisfaction with timeliness,

appraising it as only “average”. The fact that “timeliness” elicited the most negative response (although over 75% still regarded it as “good” or “excellent” points once again to the slow nature of consortium work and that fact that this causes some frustrations.

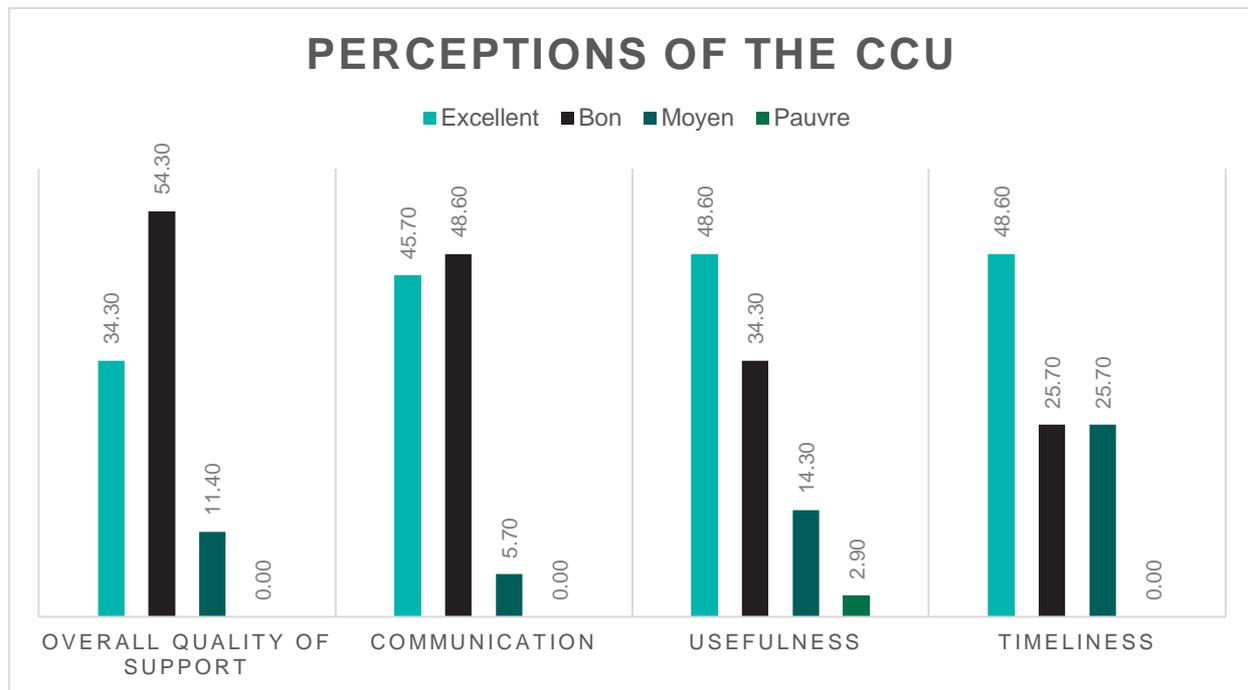


Fig. 3: Perceptions of the CCU from partners who responded to online staff survey

It is evident that the CCU are very active, engaged and in constant contact with the 6 partner organisations. There is a very strong commitment to quality. This commitment is manifested in the various implementation guides, SOPs and monitoring tools that have been put in place by the Consortium.

Implementation Guides are documents linked clearly to a result and logframe activity/ies, developed by a partner organisation with related experience and competence, with a general description and timeline of necessary steps to be undertaken to complete the given activity, what monitoring will be necessary and an overview of available budget. The guides are of varying length, indicating varying levels of detail. The Guide for implementing Village Saving and Loans activities (VSLA) for example is less than one page whereas the guide for cash distributions runs to 26 pages and is accompanied by a 12 page Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) document. However VSLA activities have not yet started, so it is expected that more input on that activity will come in time. Indeed partners confirmed that for each activity they are set to implement in their assigned geographic zone, a detailed SOP for that work must be drawn up. It is very clear that within the context of a consortium this services to standardise implementation, and to ensure the CCU has ample oversight of what is planned and the level of quality being applied. However this was raised many times in Key Informant Interviews as creating more delays due to layers of feedback and approval on these Terms of Reference.

Overall the implementation guides were viewed positively by Consortium members, with many Key informants expressing the value of different partners with different competencies in different areas developing implementation guides according to their area of expertise. Five out of the 25 animators (20%) who responded to the survey were not aware of the implementation guides. However the majority were both aware of the guides and had received related training. All field level staff evaluated the guides as all being useful, although two respondents stated that they weren't available when they were needed.

Another issue raised is the complexity of the programme itself, and that trying to implement such a complex programme through 6 different organisations with very different technical competencies and levels of capacity in different

geographic regions is hugely challenging, if not impossible. That all activities have to be implemented in all provinces is a huge undertaking, and each province faces its own contextual challenges. Trying to ensure partners are all focusing on the same activities and advance in a coordinated manner has also been challenge when each organisation has its own innate “rhythm”. The initial delays in year 1 have further exacerbated these difficulties and it seems doubtful that the full breadth of programme activities can be implemented in the 18 months that remains.

Overall, partners are largely appreciative of the level of support from the CCU, especially in relation to face to face interaction through field visits. Field visit reports (Ouaddai Oct 2020 and Salamat February 2021) that were shared in the course of this evaluation were clear and concise but with sufficient detail to allow for a record of progress. Clear action points for follow up are also included. Partners specifically mentioned their satisfaction with these visits and the benefit of face to face interaction with the CCU members.

Five committees have been put in place by the consortium relating to Finance, Logistics, M&E, Programing, Directors as well as a sixth steering committee which includes donor representatives, UNHCR, relevant government ministry and representatives from both DIZA consortium (Est and Sud). Clear Terms of Reference for each group exist and there are regular meetings held, ranging from once every 2 months for programmes to once a quarter (see table below)

Committee	Planned	Actual in 2020
Comité de Direction	Quarterly	3
Comité de Suivi-Opérationnel	Every two months	3 plus an end of year workshop with Comité de Suivi-Évaluation
Comité de Suivi-Évaluation	Every two months	3 plus an end of year workshop with Comité de Suivi-Opérationnel
Group de travail technique financier	Every two months	6
Groupe de travail appui systèmes	Quarterly	3

*Table 1: Planned V Actual Consortium Committee Meetings 2020*

The committees are essential for providing a structured forum for partners to come together to discuss common issues, and despite difficulties with online communication, they are create a space for learning among partners and without these forum, partners essentially work in silos in their assigned province. Again minutes of such meetings are well documented which is really useful as they can be referenced in future conversations. However there was a minority dissenting view in Key Informant Interviews that the committees, while useful for meeting other partners, are not having any impact on speeding up implementation – however it must be said that this is not a defined objective of these committees.

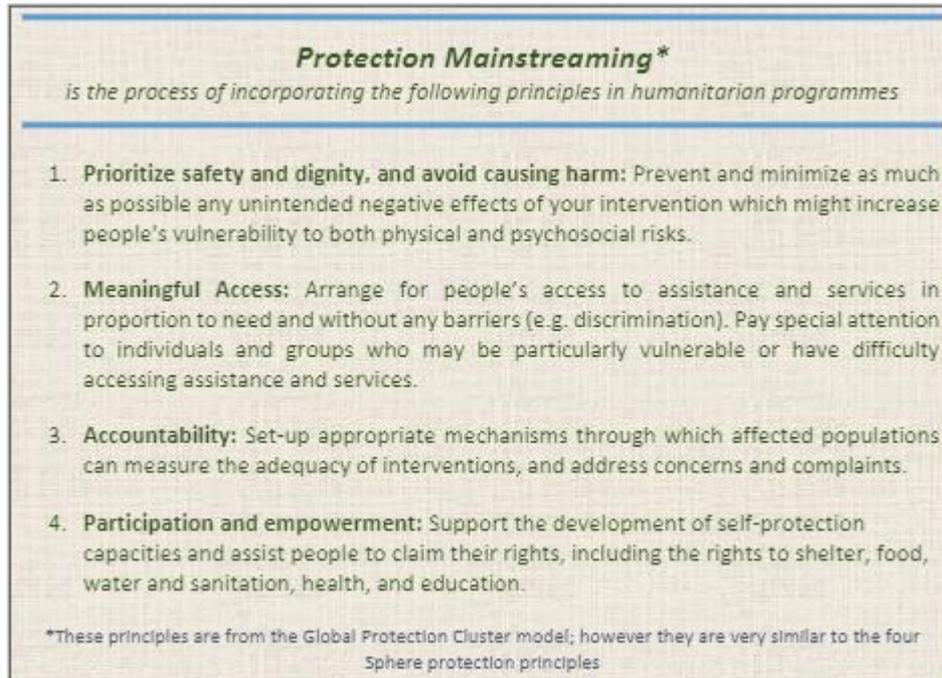
It is clear that being part of this Consortium offers a huge opportunity for recognition by both local authorities and donors, and exposure to competencies of international partners. It is positive to note that all those interviewed at all levels acknowledge the development of the working relationships and the positive state of the consortium at this midpoint in the project. It is felt that the Consortium is well poised to implement the key activities of this programme.

- **Other Partners**

Other partnerships also exist within the consortium, including partnership with UNHCR. However there was little evidence of any impact of either of these partnerships at the midpoint of this programme. There is little engagement with UNHCR and partners are either unaware or dismissive of their role.

## Protection

The mainstreaming of protection throughout all programme activities has been a clear focus of the programme thus far. Mainstreaming protection means that specific principles must be addressed including prioritising safety and dignity of beneficiaries, and avoiding causing harm; ensuring meaningful access of the most vulnerable without discrimination; ensuring accountability to all stakeholders including the most vulnerable beneficiaries and supporting the participation and empowerment of all stakeholders to the programme, including beneficiaries. These principles are summarised in the table below, and assessed in the following sections:



*Fig 4: Protection Mainstreaming Overview from Concern Worldwide Approaches to Protection Paper, 2018*

### Safety and Security

Key Informants were unanimous in their opinion that the safety and security of beneficiaries is taken into account at all times during the implementation of the DIZA programme.

However, responses to the online survey were not as positive. Although the majority of 62% did agree that this was the case, a quarter of respondents thought that this happened most (but not all) of the time, while almost 14% considered this was only sometimes taken into consideration. This means that overall almost 40% of respondents considered that there were times when security and protection were not given adequate consideration. Looking at this at a provincial level reveals that the situation seems to be worse in Ouaddai than in the other two provinces. In Ouaddai the majority of respondents (60%) consider there are times when security and protection were not given adequate consideration. It should be noted that although sample sizes were obviously small, it would be worth looking at why staff are not as confident in Ouaddai in relation to security and protection as beneficiaries as in other provinces.

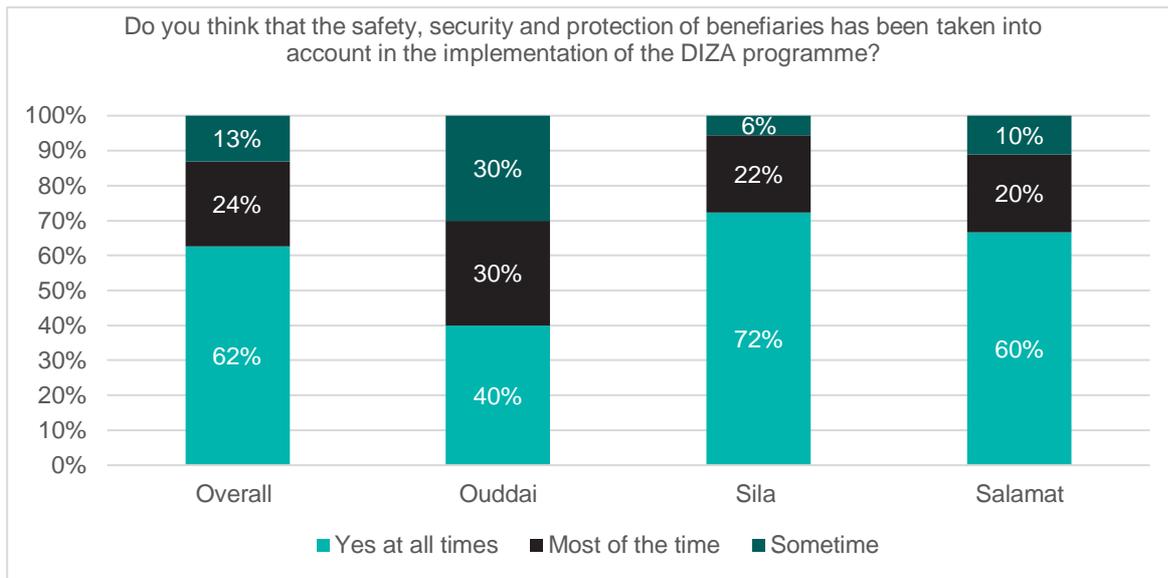


Fig 5: Perceptions from DIZA staff respondents to online survey in relation to safety, security and protection

Staff respondents to the online survey gave the following range of responses to an open questions asking for their opinions of protection initiatives in the DIZA programme

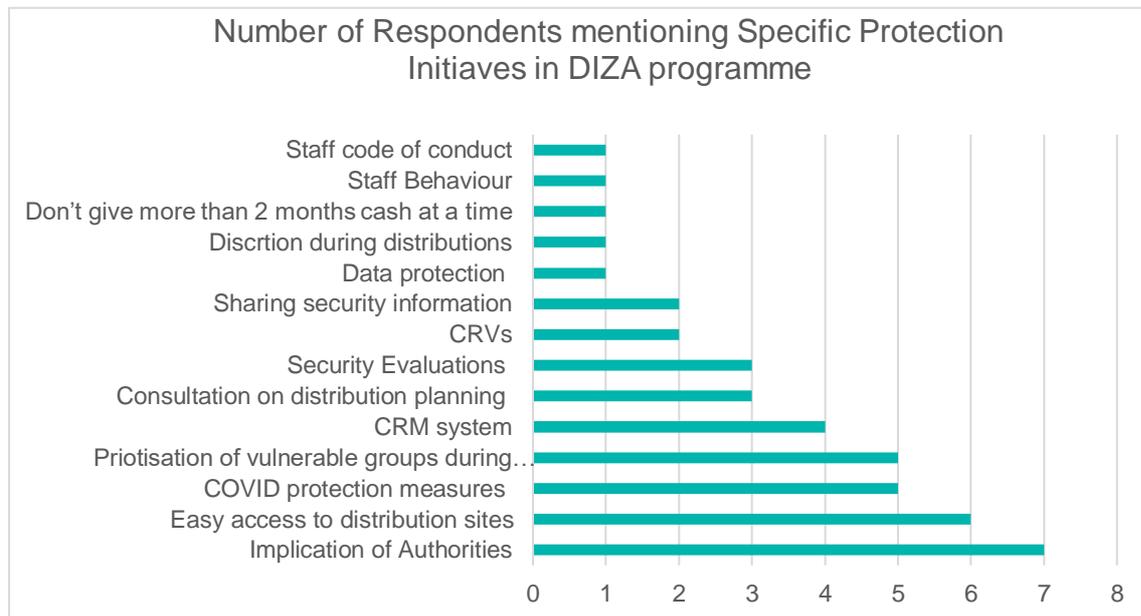


Fig 6: Responses from DIZA staff respondents to online survey to an open questions asking for examples of specific protection initiatives in the DIZA programme

It is interesting to note that the most commonly cited protection measure was the implication of local authorities. This demonstrates the widespread awareness among staff that local authorities have been involved in this programme, and it is interesting that this is considered as positive for the protection of beneficiaries. There is a suggestion that perhaps this is an indication that having local authorities involved and on side avoids insecurity, rather than proactively enhancing security. This is something that can be followed up on through further consultations with staff and communities.

Ensuring easy access distribution sites (distribution site within 5km); ensuring COVID prevention measures are in place at distributions; prioritisation of vulnerable groups during distributions as well as having a CRM system in place were the other most commonly mentioned initiatives in the online survey responses on this topic. Responses from Key informants were aligned- focusing very much on distribution organisation. However it is interesting to note that implication of local authorities were not mentioned by any Key Informant.

In terms of staff behaviour and related codes of conduct, this was only mentioned by one respondent as a measure that increases the protection of beneficiaries. However all respondents answered in the affirmative when asked a direct question about signing such a document, and 86% of respondents stated that they also had received a related training. This is another positive indication that protection is taken seriously within the consortium. Key informants also confirmed that standards for staff behaviour are in place and that codes of conduct have been signed by all staff. However there was some discrepancy in responses as to whether the training and code of conducts were specific to DIZA and came from the CCU; or they are internal processes already in place within organisations

Another point of inconsistency is in the consideration of the use of armed escorts. While clear direction has come from the CCU that this measure is not to be adopted, with a specific policy developed in April 2020 and shared with all partners, there were some partners who consider this to be essential for the protection of beneficiaries. However it is clear that the CCU is aware of this point of tension between organisations and accepted standards and it is consistently addressed. Indeed it was an agenda point for the meeting of the Comité Suivi-Operationnel on April 20<sup>th</sup> attended by the evaluator.

It is also noteworthy that during this meeting the issue of Cash for Work activities during Ramadan were discussed in great depth, in relation to ensuring safety of beneficiaries who are working in very high temperatures without food or water. It was obvious from this discussion that the safety of beneficiaries is given prime consideration at every level.

From a beneficiary's perspective, as revealed through Post Distribution Monitoring (PDMs) following seed distributions in summer 2020, and more recent cash PDMs, few security issues have arisen in these two prominent activities. The following statistics are noteworthy in this regard.

From CASH PDMs:

- 95% felt safe travelling to and from, and waiting, for cash distributions;
- 98% felt safe after receiving and while spending their cash.
- 97% said cash did not cause conflict in the household;
- 100% said no community or tension in community

From Seeds and Tools PDM:

- 97% stated the distributions did not cause any conflict/tension/disagreement in the household
- 98% stated the distributions did not cause any conflict in community

While this reveals a very small minority of people did express safety concerns, follow up questions and further monitoring did not reveal any major concerns. For example for the 7 people who stated in the seeds and tools PDM that there was conflict in the community, follow up questions revealed that 3 people stated that targeting was the cause of such conflict, 3 people said it was due to distribution organisation and one person said it was linked to speeding. However a resolution was found in 5 of the 7 instances.

Two staff respondents to the online survey gave examples of some conflicts caused by this programme that they were aware of. Examples include issues relating to cases of divorce where the man wanted to be the sole beneficiary of the programme; issues with targeting where a reduced number of cantons were included and issues with community development projects not including construction, support to health or education structure or drilling boreholes.

## **Participation and Accountability**

Protection principles include empowering communities to participate in decision making process through consultation and having opportunities to feedback on programmes and make complaints if issues arise. This aspect of protection has also been given great consideration in the DIZA-Est programme.

76% of staff respondents to the survey stated that they considered that communities have been consulted/involved sufficiently in this programme design and implementation – results were slightly higher in Sila and Ouaddai (>80%) than Salamat (60%).

From a beneficiary perspective, the recent cash PDM provided some interesting data on this topic, revealing that 87% of beneficiaries considered that their opinion is very much, or mostly taken into account by the DIZA programme. The table below gives more detail on the responses and it is interesting to note that the responses were much more positive in Ouaddai where 73% of beneficiaries said they felt their opinion was very much taken into account, versus only 38% of respondents in Sila. However the overall percentage giving an overall positive response in both provinces is similar (91% in Ouaddai and 85% in Sila) indicating that consultation and opportunities for participation is high across both provinces. 83% of respondents to this survey were women, with a limited number of men involved (22 men in total) and there was no differences in responses between sexes. It should be noted that PDM data has not yet been collected in Salamat as distributions had not been completed, hence there is no recently available data from that province.

Do you feel that your opinion on the project is taken into account by the DIZA-Est programme? (Cash PDM March 2021)					
	Yes Very much	Mostly	Neutral	Not really	Not at all
<b>Overall</b>	57%	30%	5%	5%	1%
<b>Ouaddai</b>	74%	17%	2%	2%	2%
<b>Sila</b>	38%	47%	7%	7%	0%
<b>Salamat</b>	-	-	-	-	-

*Table 2: Responses from Cash Recipients during Post Distribution Monitoring on their level of participation in DIZA programme (March 2021)*

The same question was posed during the Seeds and Tools PDM in summer 2020, and that survey does include results from Salamat, showing that 45% of respondents in Salamat agreed that their opinion is taken into account by DIZA programme and a further 41% agreed this was mostly the case. These results (86% positive) are comparable with more recent results from the other provinces. This was likely due to the fact that a detailed needs assessment was conducted in Salamat prior to the seeds and tools distributions, and this was not done in the other provinces. Nonetheless, there was still a high level of agreement from beneficiaries in Sila (85% positive), indicating that even without a detailed needs assessment, beneficiaries in Sila were mostly content with the level of consultation in August 2020, which included focus groups and use of findings from previous evaluations to inform selection of items.

Data from Ouaddai in Seeds and Tools PDM show a much lower level of confidence from beneficiaries that their opinion is taken into account than in other provinces. In this survey from August 2020, 30% of respondents (33% of women and 28% of men) considered their opinion was not taken into account at all while another 30% considered it was "not

really” taken into account. It is extremely positive to see the evolution of this indicator over time with 90% of people in Ouaddai expressing positive views on the issue of their participation in the more recent CASH PDM in March 2020 (above).

The data below also shows little variation in the opinion of men and women on this issue.

Do you feel that your opinion on the project is taken into account by the DIZA-Est programme? (Seeds and Tools PDM Summer 2020)					
	Yes Very much	Mostly	Neutral	Not really	Not at all
	44% (49% F, 36% M)	32% (32% F, 33% M)	6% (6% F, 8% M)	8% (7% F, 11% M)	8% (6% F, 11% M)
Ouaddai	10% (11% F, 10% M)	15% (13% F, 17% M)	11% (11% F, 12% M)	32% (33% F, 32% M)	30% (33% F, 28% M)
Sila	61% (64% F, 55% M)	24% (22% F, 26% M)	2% (2% F, 3% M)	1% (1% F, 1% M)	10% (7% F, 12% M)
Salamat	45% (48% F, 38% M)	41% (39% F, 46% M)	7% (7% F, 9% M)	6% (6% F, 6% M)	0% (0% F, 1% M)

Table 3: Responses from Seeds and Tools Recipients during Post Distribution Monitoring on their level of participation in DIZA programme (August 2021)

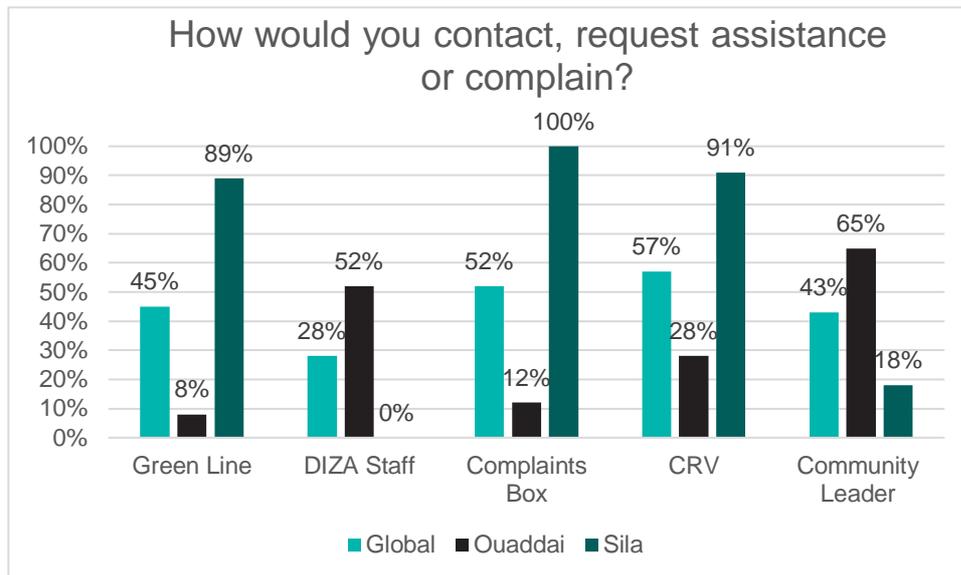
Other useful information from the Seeds and Tools PDM showed that 93% of respondents (80% in Ouaddai, 90% in Sila and 98% in Salamat) stated that they were consulted on what seeds and tools they needed most. This level of consultation is commendable. Again, the percentage in Ouaddai is lower than in the other two provinces but we know from more recent PDMs that challenges in relation to consultation seem to have been addressed.

Complaints Response Mechanisms (CRM) are an essential part of integrating protection into programming by giving beneficiaries an opportunity to feedback and register grievances or complaints in a safe and transparent way. The DIZA consortium have put a lot of effort into setting up a comprehensive CRM system with multiple ways to complain including through a dedicated phone line per province (Green line) and complaints boxes in all target communities.

84% of staff respondents to the online survey considered that people in targeted communities have possibility to make complaints about any aspect of the project, including staff behaviour, with levels of agreement similar across all provinces. All respondents mentioned the complaints box and “green line” as the key ways for beneficiaries to make complaints.

The recent Cash PDM gives an overview of beneficiaries’ knowledge of how to make complaints, revealing quite a different situation in the different provinces. It is clear from the below graph that despite staff awareness of complaints mechanisms in Ouaddai, the beneficiaries have very little awareness with less than 10% mentioning the Green line and only 12% mentioning complaints boxes when asked how they would contact, request assistance or complain about any problem or concern related to the cash distribution. Even knowledge of the role of the Village Accountability Committee (CRV) in relation to feedback and complaints was relatively low at less than 30%. In contrast in Sila, almost 90% of PDM respondents were aware of the green line, everyone knew about the complaints box, and knowledge of CRVs role was also above 90%. This disparity is striking and it is clear that a lot more work is needed in relation to

rollout and awareness raising on the CRM in Ouaddai. This is further confirmed by the fact that only 35% of respondents in Ouaddai expressed satisfaction with the mechanisms that exist to submit complaints or give feedback, compared to 98% of respondents in Sila.



*Fig 7: Responses from Cash Recipients during Post Distribution Monitoring on how to make a complaint (March 2021)*

As stated above, no recent PDM data is available for Salamat as cash distributions had not yet taken place, hence Salamat is not included in the above graph. However, the same question was also asked in summer 2020 following the seeds and tools distribution.

No one in Salamat mentioned the Green line (which hadn't yet been set up), with 37% stating they would use the complaints box and 53% preferring to talk to the CRV and 64% a community leader. Now that the Green line is active in Salamat, the response to this question should be looked at closely at in the upcoming PDM in Salamat.

Responses in Sila showed quite high levels of awareness in all mechanisms in Summer 2020 (Green line 56%, Complaints box 46% and CRV 53%), although not as high as current levels. This shows an increase in awareness over past few months which is a positive reflection of work of programme staff in this regard.

The most difficult to understand data relates to Ouaddai, where levels of knowledge on the different complaints mechanisms were much higher in Summer 2020 than following the more recent data collection in March 2021. It is difficult to hypothesise how awareness levels could have fallen so dramatically in 9 months, unless it relates to the lack of confidence in the systems set up. This is definitely worthy of more investigation.

If you had a problem or concern related to the distribution or to the DIZA-EST Consortium's work in general, how would you contact the DIZA-EST Consortium to request assistance or to complain? (Seeds and Tools PDM Summer 2020)						
	Green Line	DIZA staff	Box	CRV	Community Leader	Don't know
Overall	23%	14%	41%	57%	58%	2%
Ouaddai	41%	52%	47%	77%	75%	0%
Sila	56%	20%	46%	53%	39%	0%
Salamat	0%	0%	37%	53%	64%	3%

Table 4: Responses from Seeds and Tools Recipients during Post Distribution Monitoring on make a complaint from Post Distribution Monitoring survey (August 2020)

The PDM data following the recent cash distribution also offers some insight into the functionality of the CRV in the different provinces. Whereas in Sila 100% of beneficiaries stated that they were informed about details of the distribution through the CRV, in Ouaddai this was the case for only 13% of respondents with the majority getting information from the village chief or local leader (72%). This highlights another disparity between the provinces in terms of communication, participation and accountability.

### **Access**

An important aspect of protection is ensuring access to assistance and services in proportion to need and without any barriers or discrimination, paying special attention to individuals and groups who may be particularly vulnerable. The lengthy targeting process undertaken in this programme was specifically aimed at identifying the extreme poor and vulnerable. The targeting report is very specific in how targeting was finalised and the prioritisation of different vulnerable groups according to their economic status and their suitability for the different aspects of the programme.

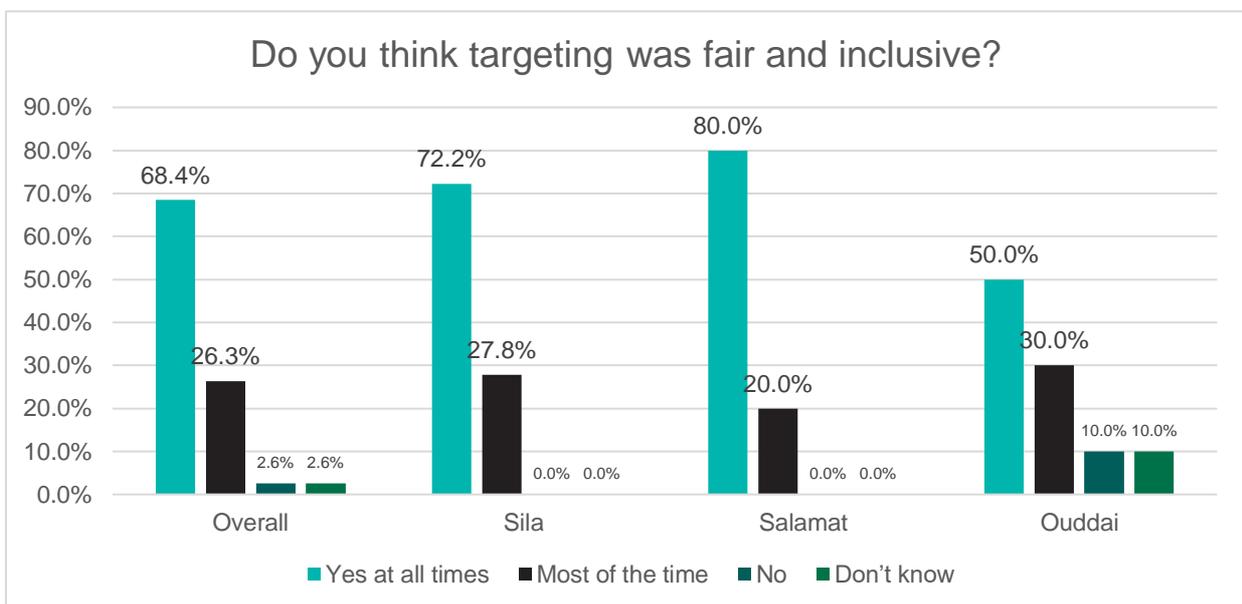
The initial geographic targeting prioritised the communities with a high concentration of refugees and returnees (identified in collaboration with UNHCR), to ensure the inclusion of these particularly vulnerable groups and in line with the programme aim of improving 'host zones'. The follow on census of all households in these villages then sought to ensure the most vulnerable had access to suitable activities.

The unconditional cash component targets households identified as extremely vulnerable by the fact of having limited economic assets and other specific issues including being a child headed households, an elderly woman headed households, one parent households, households headed by a disabled person. Likewise the cash for work component prioritises households with a high dependency ratio, households headed by a disabled person – but with an adult available to do the high intensity labour. Professional training is aimed at women headed households, disabled headed households who are not targeted by other components, ensuring there is a person of age in the household to participate in the training.

The efforts made to provide access to the programme for a wide range of vulnerable groups through different levels of activities and support is commendable, although not infallible. Although most Key Informants expressed satisfaction with the process and are confident the most vulnerable have access through the programme through the intense

process of identification of beneficiaries for the different activities, there is also the dissenting view that applying such a scientific measure to a social context is problematic. There was an opinion for a minority of Key Informants that such a survey creates arbitrary distinctions between neighbours who are equally vulnerable, and thus some extremely poor and vulnerable people have no access to the programme by the fact of not fulfilling a single arbitrary criteria at a specific moment in time.

Looking at the opinion of those who are working on the frontline with communities on a daily basis, almost 70% of staff respondents to household survey considered targeting was fair and inclusive at all times, and a further 25% were of the opinion that this happened most of the time. Looking at responses across the different provinces, the situation seems worse in Ouaddai, where only 50% considered that targeting was fair and inclusive at all times. However these results are from a small sample size of 10 staff members so even one dissenting voice causes a big variation in scoring. Nonetheless, this should be followed up on to see was there any differences in the process in Ouaddai that causes this disparity.



*Fig 8: Staff perception on fairness and inclusivity of targeting survey*

Having made such efforts to include the most vulnerable in the programme through the in-depth targeting approach, key Informants and staff respondents to surveys both confirmed that activities are also organised with ample consideration of the specific needs of the most vulnerable. For example in recent cash distributions, distribution points located so to be easily accessible to all beneficiaries, and the elderly, pregnant women, disabled people were prioritized to the top of the queue for the distribution itself.

### Sustainability

The programme is designed to address the gap between humanitarian and development activities, with elements of sustainability built in to support the more immediate humanitarian response related to cash.

Key elements of sustainability included in the proposal are the management committees for community infrastructure (linked to local development plans), links to social protection, the creation of new economic opportunities, access to micro credit, and capacity building of local authorities. Other aspects mentioned in the proposal were providing alternatives to firewood, establishment of Rural Resource Centre, and local Green Committees. It is clear from even this short synopsis that the programme is very complex, and has considered multiple dimensions that should lead to

sustainability in the long term. However this is the theory behind a programme that is lagging behind in implementation, and that is the ultimate threat to sustainability found in this evaluation.

Almost all respondents to the online staff survey are confident that the programme will bring about long term change, although two respondents from Sila were unsure in this regard. From the perspective of those staff who are actively implementing the project, the following aspects were cited as being key to sustainability in an open question on this issue (where size of text in below diagram is relative to how often an issue was cited):



*Fig 9: Staff Responses to online survey to open question on key elements for sustainability in DIZA programme*

The above graphic emphasises the wide range of activities planned for this programme – but few have been completed yet. The emphasis from staff seems to be very much on the financial and livelihood support to beneficiaries with a clear logic that providing cash injections to vulnerable households along with support to their food security needs (via seeds and tools), while simultaneously providing livelihood opportunities and access to credit can bring about long term change. Other aspects of ensuring community participation and engaging local authorities are also seen as vital elements of sustainability. The cash for work projects themselves which provides resources to address identified community needs in Local Development Plans (LDPs) are also seen as very sustainable. Key Informants particularly echoed this aspect which is strengthened by the creation of infrastructure management committees, and indeed the theory described above aligns to the opinions of the majority of Key Informants.

It is interesting to note that some elements of the proposals relating to firewood alternatives, rural resource centre or green committees were not mentioned by any survey respondents, neither were they mentioned by any Key Informant. This underlines the huge range of activities that were included in the initial proposal, and it is clear a prioritisation in relation to implementation must be made at this stage.

Another aspect of sustainability revealed by Key Informants, though not mentioned in the survey responses, is the Consortium structure of including a local organisation in each province which is favourable toward long terms sustainability. The enduring presence of local partners in the target area and the potential to maintain contact with communities for post implementation support and guidance should not be overlooked. However this requires continued financing and support to these local NGOs to allow them to provide the crucial level of accompaniment, monitoring and continued engagement with target communities. This is key to sustainability,

Throughout programme documents, consultation with local authorities is cited as a key step in the start-up of any activity – from targeting verification, validation and engagement in relation to HIMO sites, to set up of Complaints

responses mechanisms and location of complaints boxes. 92% of respondents conformed that the programme is accepted by local authorities, and key informants very much in agreement with this assertion. Only two respondents from Ouaddai were unsure of this point.

However project reports do acknowledge that this often is not an easy process, especially in contexts where emergency aid is more the norm, than the slower more in depth analysis required for more long term programming. This has been confirmed through key informant interviews, where it was expressed that the intense consultation with authorities may have actually increased expectations and there is a fear that support of local authorities may diminish when there is no concrete output following this long period of engagement.

The above diagram and citations from the proposal indicates that the programme is very detailed in its conception, addressing multiple dimensions in a complex logic. Activities are designed to be implemented in a specific order to reinforce earlier activities and ensure sustainability of results. However in reality the implementation of the project across such a wide geographic area, in a complex consortium structure, in a relatively short time frame is just not feasible.

The fact is that sustainability is dependent on whole array of planned activities being successfully implemented, and during this evaluation it became evident that such implementation will be a challenge. And it is not only time that is a threat to the successful implementation of all programme activities. The broad consensus across all interviewees from all organisations is that the number field staff dedicated to this programme is not adequate to carry out the wide range of activities required. This has to be looked at and prioritisation made if there is to be any chance at creating long term change.

## Efficiency

In the course of this midterm evaluation, the efficiency of the DIZA-Est programme has been examined from three perspectives, reflecting on whether financial resources, human resources and time have been used well thus far in the programme.

- **Finance**

An analysis of the budget for this programme versus year 1 and year 2 expenditure was made in order to make an assessment of efficiency from a finance perspective. This review revealed some interesting findings

By the end of the second year of the programme (Nov 2020), 43% of funds had been spent (according to Year 2 finance report). However there is a noticeable variance on expenditure across the different areas of the budget.

- 88% of the budget for equipment has been spent – which is normal in that equipment is an accepted start-up cost.
- 42% of the HR budget and 41% of the local office budget has been spent – aligned with the fact we are at the midpoint of the programme
- However what is hugely concerning is that only 10% of budget related to the programme results (section 6) has been spent. This is due to the slow start up of this programme and the fact that the first 2.5 years of the programme has very much been dedicated to programme planning and set up, and as such, budgets for staff have been consumed and office cost covered, but without similar expenditure on concrete field activities

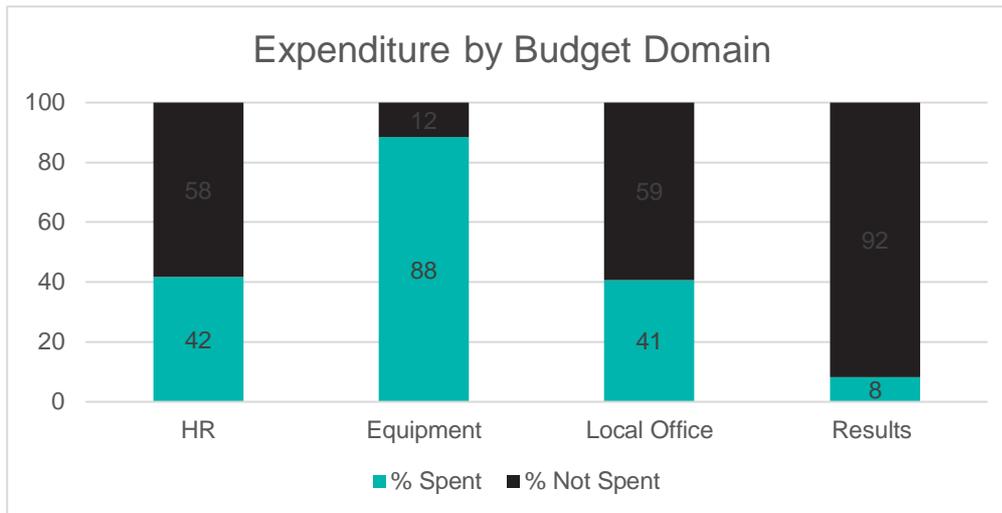


Fig 10: % of budget spent per domain from Year Annual Financial Report

The under expenditure on programme results can be rectified quickly when we consider that two largest line items in the budget are the unconditional cash and cash for work activities, amounting to over 1.5million euro. These two activities were kicked off in the first quarter of 2021 in Sila and Ouaddai, and were due to kick off soon in Salamat. However unforeseen political tension has halted field level activities and this is concerning when these activities are already late.

Another interesting finding from the budget analysis is that almost a third (29%) of the entire spending on programme results to the end of Year 2 of the programme has been on the targeting survey. Indeed in the first year of the programme, over three quarters (76%) of expenditure on programme results was on the targeting survey. This reveals what a massive and expensive exercise this was, and that a specific focus on this key activity from an efficiency perspective is warranted (see below).

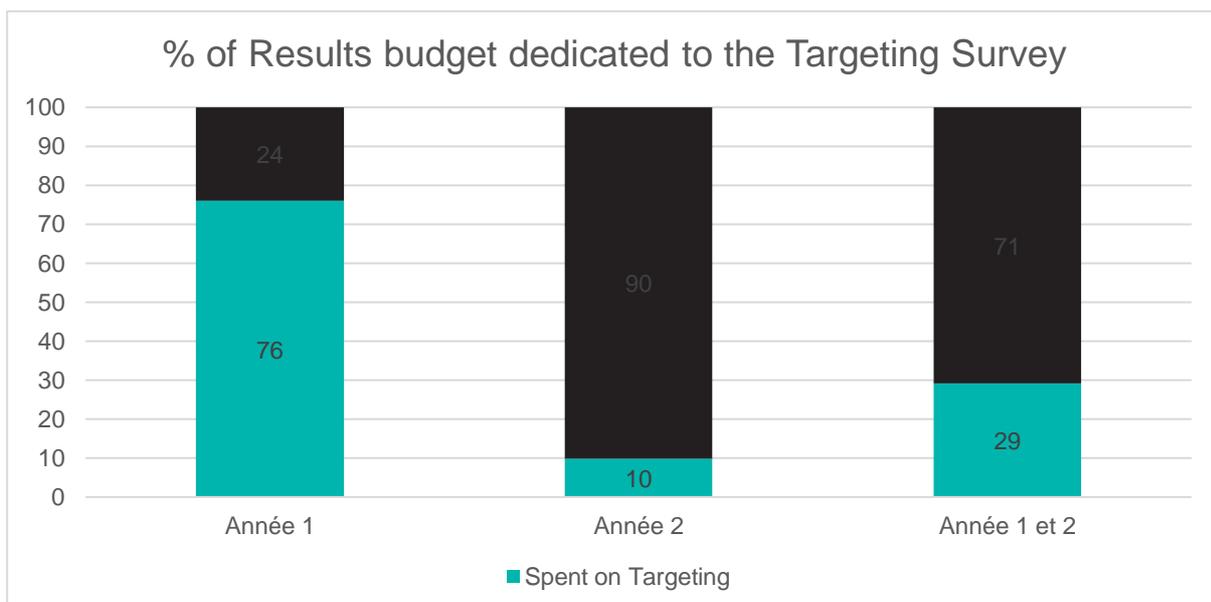


Fig 11: % of budget for Results spent on targeting

- Time

To examine the question on whether time has been used well, it is useful to look at a general timeline of the programme to date.

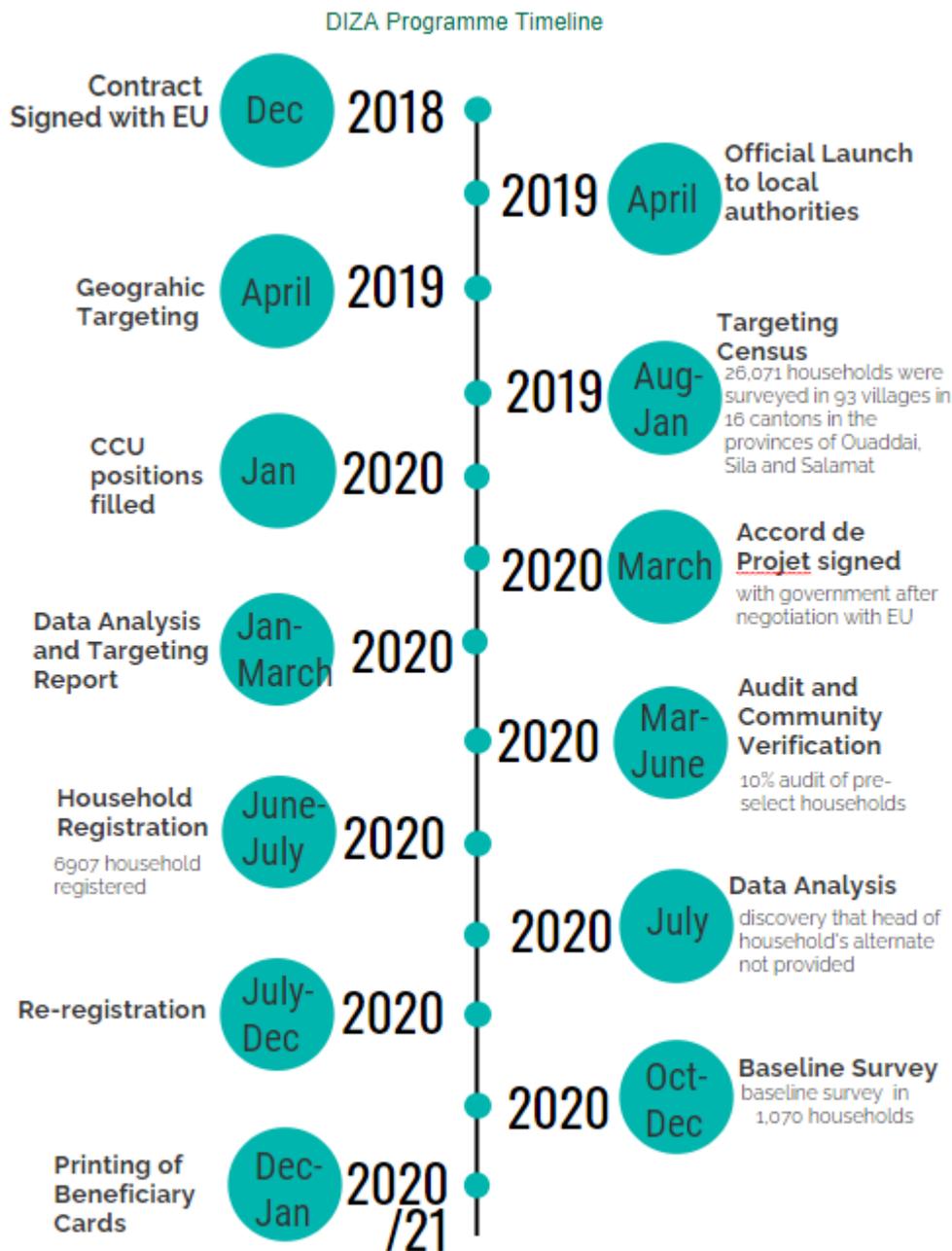


Fig 12: DIZA-Est programme time line 2018-2021

This timeline indicates an obvious delay in the start of the programme – the contract was signed in December 2018, but the presentation to local authorities was not until April 2019 and the targeting of beneficiaries did not start until August 2019. Thus there was an initial delay of 10 months between contract signing and starting the process of identifying direct beneficiaries of this programme

The timeline also shows that the entire targeting and registration process from geographic targeting, to beneficiary registration and printing of ID cards, took more than 18 months. It was not until 2021 (the third year of the programme) that the main activities of cash distribution to beneficiaries could commence, following the printing of beneficiary cards.

There are justifications for the time taken - see detail below on targeting and the slow nature of consortium in general. It is also clear from Key Informants that the detailed planning process was necessary on many levels. However when looking at the above timeline from an independent perspective, there can be no doubt that there are a lot of inefficiencies in how this programme has been set up and implemented to date.

There were also some suggestions from Key Informants that the long drawn out process engaging over 26,000 households and multiple data collection exercises built great expectations among communities, with little visible activities to the end of year 2. Likewise there is the suggestion that the delay from first engaging with authorities (April 2019) to the start of the cash distributions (February 2021), has caused frustration among the authorities that may have weakened their support for the programme. However with no data from or engagement with local authorities in the course of this evaluation, the level of frustration and the subsequent impact on support is impossible to verify.

- **Staffing**

By its very nature, a consortium approach is not the most efficient structure for programme implementation. As well as the slow nature of decision making, reaching consensus and ensuring a coordinated approach, there is the additional financial burden of supporting the equipment, office, and staff costs across multiple organisations. The HR costs in particular are expected to be high, and in the case of DIZA represent 37% of the total budget; and 55% of expenditure to date. These costs are high but acceptable, especially in the context of a consortium with multiple partner organisations and an overall Consortium Coordination Unit, and staff costs associated with each component.

However, Key Informants have been unanimous in their consideration that staffing, specifically staffing at field level is not adequate and has been a weakness of the budget from the design phase. This is evident when the number of field staff (animators) is compared to the number of villages that have to be covered, and the wide range of activities that have to be implemented. The concern is that the current number of field staff will not be able to complete all activities as planned.

This indicates that staffing costs, although high, are inadequate; or that the current staffing structure and related budget are not being used well, and a reallocation of staffing towards field level support is necessary.

- **Targeting survey**

As stated above, the process of beneficiary identification through targeting and subsequent registration of those beneficiaries was a huge task that involved a census across 93 villages involving 26,071 households. An additional 799 households were resurveyed as part of the validation exercise. Community consultation to verify and validate beneficiaries was also carried out. The thoroughness of this exercise is undisputable. However the efficiency of the exercise must be questioned.

The costs of the targeting survey (including training of enumerators) in Year 1 accounted for over 75% of all expenditure of activities, and almost 10% of all expenditure. To the end of year 2, related expense accounted for 30% of the total expenditure on activities in year 1 and year 2.

The duration of the exercise is also remarkable. The data collection initially started in Sept 2019. It should be noted that this was already 10 months after the programme start date. Initial data collection concluded in Jan 2020, followed by verification and community verification, which took longer than expected due to COVID restrictions. Detailed registration was carried out in summer 2020. It was then realised that the majority of households did not provide information in the registration process on the head of household's alternate in the event of absence resulting in the

need for a re-registration process that was not finalised until Dec 2020. It was only then that beneficiary cards could be printed.

Thus it took almost 1.5 years for the process to be finalised and consortium partners were not in a position to undertake the main programme activities of cash distributions until Quarter 1 2021. This programme was initially a 3 year programme, due to finish in Oct 2021. The fact that the registration of those who are to benefit from the programme was not completed until Year 3 is a huge inefficiency- especially when it is considered that budgets for staff and running costs were being consumed in this time frame- resulting in a vastly disproportionate expenditure on different areas of the budget.

The results of the survey are well regarded as being transparent and inclusive and anecdotally it seems that the process is well respected and accepted at community level. The highly inclusive nature of the targeting survey in including everyone in each village, as well as the rigorous community validation approach used, has given communities confidence in the results and there has been a high level of acceptance of the final beneficiary lists. There have been complaints in some districts, namely Sila, but this is to be expected in any programme in which chosen beneficiaries will be given monetary support, and maybe indicative of the advanced nature of the CRM system in Sila as compared to other provinces. However no conflict has been reported due to the targeting.

However, when delving more into the methodology of the survey, it is evident that arbitrary decisions had to be made in terms of indicators, weightings and thresholds (although in consultation with partners) to identify the most vulnerable and that this processes is by no means exact or infallible. Indeed the targeting report while very detailed is difficult to understand and different vulnerability scores were used in the different province to identify the most vulnerable. In practise this means that in the case of two households with exactly the same score, but in different provinces, one may be a programme beneficiary while the other may not.

Similarly, key informants remarked on the fact that in communities where everyone lives in poverty, such an exercise can mean one household is targeted while another is not, when the only difference might be the existence of a sheep or goat at that moment in time. The results from the targeting did reveal over 60% of the population have high levels of vulnerability, while only the 5% who were identified of having extremely high levels were targeted. This fact has led to the opinion of some key informants that beneficiaries of cash transfers may end up sharing the project inputs with other vulnerable families who make up 60% of their community, thus rendering this very specific targeting exercise unnecessary. However this practise does not seem to be widespread – according to the results of Post distribution monitoring with 133 cash recipients conducted in March 2021 only 7% admitted to sharing out the cash with friends, relatives or other community members. This is an important aspect to continue to monitor and report as more Post Distribution Monitoring is carried out to further investigate the usefulness of the complex targeting approach used in this programme.

The census approach was driven by the necessity to share information with the Registre Social Unifié (RSU) to populate a database that can be used by the national social protection programme. However there has been no confirmation in this evaluation of the utility or impact of the data shared. Moreover the fact that the census did not cover the whole district but rather only 93 villages in 16 out of 46 cantons across the three provinces, leads to a question of the utility of the exercise overall. How will having specific data on a fraction of the overall population help the authorities? The value for money of such an approach must be questioned.

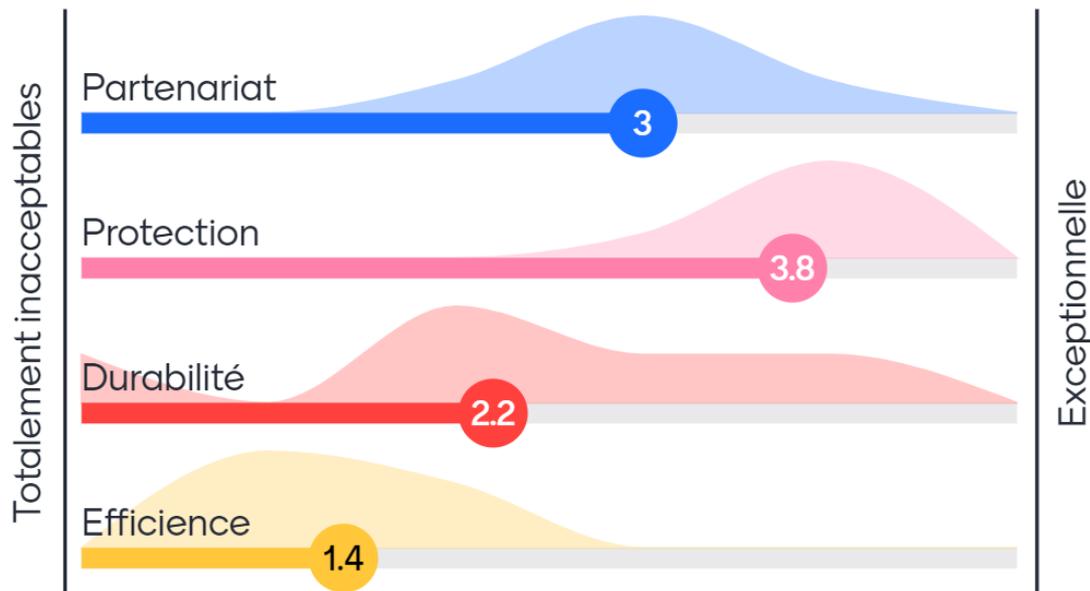
There are suggestions that this approach in attracting new people to enter a target village in order have a chance at being targeted for the programme. This was seen in Salamat where there were double the number of households interviewed as compared to Sila. However it is likely that this happened elsewhere also, meaning that the final database provided in the RSU is probably not accurate. This is another aspect that highlights the inefficiency of the entire process.

## Section 6: Conclusions

This section provides an assessment of the DIZA programme against the initial evaluation questions, based on the finding presented in the previous section and using the below scoring framework:

<b>5</b>	Outstanding / Exceptional Performance
<b>4</b>	Very good overall performance
<b>3</b>	Good overall performance (as expected)
<b>2</b>	Acceptable performance but with some shortcomings
<b>1</b>	Barely acceptable performance with a number of major shortcomings (require remedial action)
<b>0</b>	Totally unacceptable performance or insufficient data to make an assessment

Following the initial presentation of these findings to the DIZA Consortium Coordination Unit, Concern Country Directors and CCU representatives from DIZA-Sud, these key stakeholders assigned the following scores:



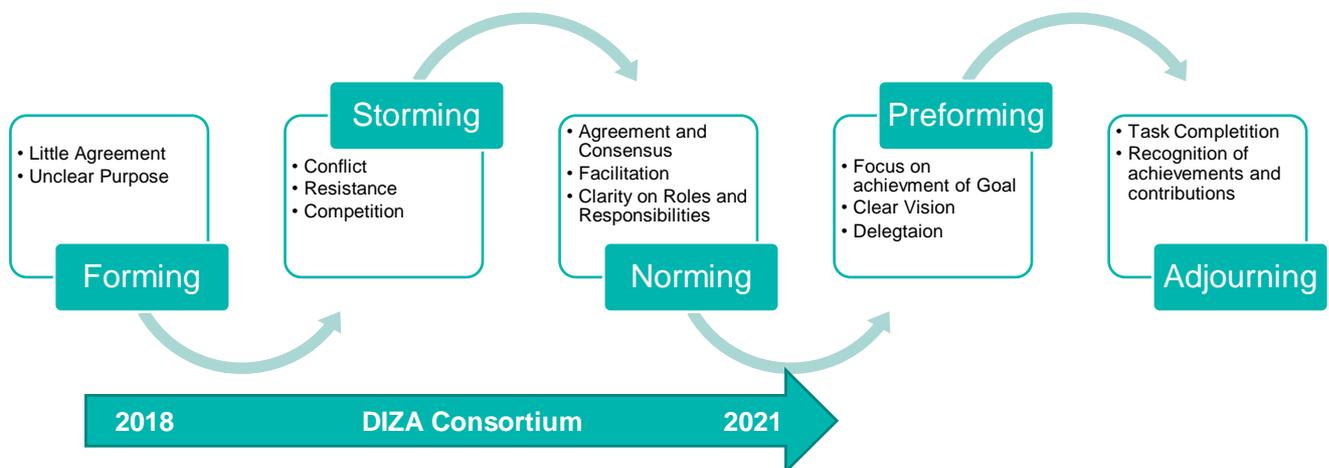
The assessment of the independent evaluator of this programme during this midterm review, broadly aligns with the above scoring with the following scores formally assigned, the justification for which are outlined in the narrative below:

<b>Partnership</b>	<b>3 - Good overall performance (as expected)</b>
<b>Protection</b>	<b>3 - Good overall performance (as expected)</b>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<b>2- Acceptable performance but with some shortcomings</b>
<b>Efficiency</b>	<b>1 - Barely acceptable performance with a number of major shortcomings (require remedial action)</b>

### Partnership - Good overall performance (as expected)

Partnership is an integral aspect of this programme, given the Consortium model used and the structure of having an international partner working closely with a local organisation in every province.

Despite initial difficulties in establishing the consortium, aligning different organisational ways of working and building provincial partnerships between local and international organisations, it is evident that the Consortium partners have moved through the theoretical phases of team development<sup>1</sup> of forming and storming (which often sees resistance, conflict competition), to a norming phase of engagement and support, and are at the start of the performing stage when hopefully all the hard efforts of the past 2 years will pay off with high quality implementation of key programme activities.



Since the Consortium Coordination Unit became fully functional with a full team in January 2020, the support has been consistent, detailed and well appreciated by partners. Implementation guides for key activities have been finalised and rolled out to partners. The Consortium Committees have been established and are regularly meeting. The CCU are undertaking reasonable regular monitoring visits to each of the provinces (although access to Salamat has been curtailed) and it is evident that the forming and storming phases have passed and the partnerships have normalised somewhat. The ground work has been laid for a high performing structure moving forward, but it should be noted that the Performing stage should include an element of delegation and trust that organisations will operate as per guidelines put in place and the focus should be on implementation of activities and achieving results.

<sup>1</sup> Bruce Tuckerman's Team-Development Model 1965

The local organisations have benefited from the experience and capacity of their international partners, as well as from the ongoing support and guidance from the CCU. There have been clear areas of progress for many organisations from implementing standard policies on staff behaviour and Code of Conduct, to rolling out comprehensive Complaints Response Mechanisms for the first time; as well as improved technical capacity in key activities such as Cash distributions and accompanying monitoring mechanisms of PDMs.

However capacity building aspect of the Consortium partnerships are so far very focused on the programme implementation and related mechanisms. It would also be useful for a clear capacity building plan to be agreed between partners so that the full benefit of the partnerships could be realised over the final two years of the programme.

### **Protection - Good overall performance (as expected)**

Protection is another area which scored well in this evaluation. The protection of beneficiaries has come out as a clear priority in documentation, interviews and data reviewed.

Security is a primary consideration in activity planning for all staff, and it is a dedicated topic in committee meetings. Monitoring this aspect is done through Post Distribution Monitoring as well as through engagement with communities through the CRV. Existing data shows few instances of security issues being raised through PDMs. There was a disparity in the opinions of staff in different provinces with regards to the prioritisation of security of beneficiaries at all times, with staff in Ouaddai not as confident of this prioritisation. This should be investigated further.

There has been widespread and consistent communication with beneficiaries through the programme to date. Data from Post Distribution Monitoring shows a positive trend in beneficiary engagement over the past 9 months from seeds and tools PDM to Cash PDM. There has been a lot of emphasis on setting up a comprehensive CRM system with Freephone number (Green line), complaints boxes and awareness raising in each province. However these systems are at different stages of development with different partners and it will be necessary to ensure those organisations lagging behind are supported to ensure their CRM system is fully functional as soon as possible. This is critical to ensure protection of beneficiaries and giving them a mechanism to communicate complaints and concerns quickly and easily. There was some inconsistent data from beneficiaries in Ouaddai in relation to awareness of different CRM mechanisms, with awareness seeming to have decreased between August 2020 and March 2021 – this should be followed up to see why this is the case.

The focus of the programme is very much on ensuring access of the most vulnerable to the programme and the comprehensive targeting exercise; and subsequent validation at community level. There were some questions raised during the course of this evaluation in relation to the targeting methodology used, where arbitrary thresholds and weightings were used to define who was to be targeted – with the potential of excluding extremely vulnerable people who did not meet these targets. However this is the case with all targeting that is not blanket coverage. It must be accepted that with limited resources, decisions must be made and no process can achieve a perfect result. Blanket coverage in a smaller geographic area would have been more inclusive – but only in that area and there would definitely be a lot more vulnerable people excluded who are outside of that target zone.

### **Sustainability - Acceptable performance but with some shortcomings**

Elements of sustainability are well considered and planned for in project documents, and it is evident that the premise of DIZA is on supporting both immediate need through cash as well as building financial capacity and livelihoods of beneficiaries to ensure the initial injection of cash is sustained well beyond the life time of the programme.

However, to succeed as planned it is imperative that the programme logic in relation to livelihood support is adhered to and key activities are implemented as planned. The fact that the key activities of cash distribution and cash for work have just started in the third year of the project, and consequently the support activities that lie behind these big budget activities are delayed is a severe threat to the sustainability of the programme.

Thus a prioritisation of the complex range of activities originally planned must be made in the context of the time remaining and the staff available at field level, and activity plans should be updated to reflect this. It also became evident in this evaluation that a risk matrix, mitigation and contingency plans in relation to activity implementation are lacking. It would be useful at this stage to consider all the potential risks that could hamper implementation over the next 18 months and brain storm on ways to mitigate against those risk, as well as contingency plans if the risks are realised.

Thus although initial plans as per the proposal had the potential for sustainable change, there are major shortcoming in implementing these plans especially in relation to time delays. Thus a score of 2 has been assigned to this domain.

### **Efficiency - Barely acceptable performance with a number of major shortcomings (require remedial action)**

Efficiency has been evaluated in terms of the use of finances, time and resources this far in the programme.

The under expenditure on concrete programme activities compared to on track spending on HR, equipment and running costs is indicative of the inefficiencies in this programme. The fact that at the end of Year 2 only 10% of the activities budget had been spent (and a third of that was on the targeting survey) is worrying, and if a value for money assessment was to be made at this time, the findings would show very little in this regard. However it is acknowledged that an intense period of expenditure is imminent with planned cash distributions and intensification of cash for work projects. None the less a huge push to carry out planned activities must be made in the time remaining.

Consortia are inefficient by design, and the DIZA consortium is no exception. Partners all described the “heaviness” of the consortium, highlighting how slow it was to get started, the slowness of reaching consensus and the layers of approval from local partner all the way up to consortium lead. The complexity of the programme also led to a slow start with a lot of planning, consultation and coordination necessary before programme activities could take place. The targeting exercise in particular was very complex and detailed, and the time taken from geographic targeting to beneficiaries registration (1.5 years) is just one illustration of the slow start up of this programme, that has contributed to a low score on this domain.

The efficiencies of current staff structures also have to be questioned, as it is clear that they are not sufficient to adequately implement such a complex programme. Redesign of this element of the budget and HR structure will have to be considered to be able to achieve programme results in remaining time period.

The targeting approach itself can also be argued to be inefficient. Although it is acknowledged that the process was driven by the requirement to provide information to the RSU, applying a scientific approach to a social issues, while transparent, can be inefficient and there are probably cheaper ways to obtain the same results. A participative targeting approach, much like the verification exercise conducted as the second part of the targeting processes, could have been used to identify the most vulnerable through community consultation rather than collecting a huge amount of data from a huge amount of people with questions over whether it will ever actually be used. This question (due to the lack of engagement from the RSU on how they are using the data) could be the biggest inefficiency of the entire programme – because however inefficient the process of data collection may have been, if the data is not used at the end then the inefficiencies are increased exponentially.

## Section 7: Recommendations and Management Response

Based on the findings and conclusions above, the follow recommendations are made:

	Recommendation	Management Response
<b>Partnership</b>	Conduct a joint reflection exercise with consortium members on the Tuckerman's phases of team development and that the Consortium has come through a number of these phases to a relatively stable "norming" phase where roles and responsibilities are recognised, and consensus has been reached on key issues. Focus now should be on moving into the stage of "Performing" on key activities and that may require a change in ways of working and specifically the focus from the CCU to allow partners increased autonomy to implement activities. A joint reflecting on how to move to that performing stage would be beneficial	
	Linked to above, discuss with partners the most efficient process for developing and getting approval for ToRs for each activity to be implemented. The layers of feedback and approval need to be minimised to ensure that there are no further delays to the programme, and to move away from the perception of "micro management" by the consortium.	
	Facilitate/support the development of formalised capacity building plans between partners in each provinces to maximise this opportunity that local NGOs have of working with an international NGO	
<b>Protection</b>	CRM rollout in Ouaddai and Salamat must be stepped up. If necessary, organise an exchange visit to review how the system has been set up and in working in Sila. Monitor PDM data to gauge how awareness of different mechanisms is progressing in the different provinces	
	Investigate reasons why knowledge and awareness of different complaints mechanisms have fallen between PDMs conducted in summer 2020 in Ouaddai and PDMs following cash distributions in March 2021.	
	Continue to do PDMs after distributions as these are proving valuable sources of information, especially in relation to security of beneficiaries, awareness and uptake of CRM systems and levels of consultation. The rollout of dashboards with capacity building for partners on how to interpret the data, what to look for and how	



	to use that data to ultimately improve programming should be prioritised.	
	Investigate why staff in the Ouaddai are less confident than staff in other provinces that the security and protection of beneficiaries are given consideration at all times during the programme	
	Recommend a refresher training for all staff on safeguarding and code of conduct, ensuring that common standards are in place	
<b>Sustainability</b>	There is a key set of activities that need to be implemented for the logic of sustained improvements to livelihoods and income generation to be possible. It is key that these activities are identified and prioritised this year.  This will require the original log frame (plus M&E plan and activity plans) to be updated and communicated to donor	
	A programme extension should also be considered in order to ensure these activities have adequate time to be completed with sufficient support and follow up to allow them to be embedded in communities and among target groups.	
	A detailed list of activities should be accompanied by a risk matrix of potential events that will cause delays to those activities, and a mitigation plan developed to plan for what to do in each eventuality so that the programme is not derailed.	
	An exit strategy should be developed that will identify how local partners can continue to support target communities and beneficiaries following the conclusion of the DIZA consortium	
<b>Efficiency</b>	The underspend on Results must be addressed, through a focus on implementing the large budget activities (Unconditional cash and Cash for Work).	
	Review staffing structures at field level in the context of revised activity plans to ensure there are adequate personnel to implement all activities as planned. If necessary, budget adjustments will have to be made to	

	ensure adequate human resources for the delivery of key programme activities	
	Continue to monitor data from PDMs in relation to % of beneficiaries who report sharing cash received. This is important information in relation to the targeting survey and whether such a specific targeting survey is necessary in a context where 60% of the population are classified as extremely poor	
	<b>For future projects</b> , consider alternatives to census data collection if possible - such as community identification of most vulnerable, followed by a verification survey of selected households.	
	<b>For future projects</b> , At project outset, identify community level activities that can be carried out before the final identification of specific beneficiaries. This will ensure the need for in depth and comprehensive targeting does not delay all activities	

## Annex 1: Terms of Reference



Microsoft Word  
Document

## Annex 2: Key Informant Interview list

Name	Organisation	Position	Interview Date
Bella Hodgkinson	Concern Worldwide	DIZA Consortium Coordinator	April 21st 2021
Abderahman Mht Abakar	ACRA	M&E Coordinator	April 22nd 2021
Mark Johnson	Concern Worldwide	Programme Director	April 22nd 2021
Christine Kiernan	Concern Worldwide	DIZA MEAL Coordinator	April 23rd 2021
Mounbaye Ngodro	APLFT	Chef de Projet	April 26th 2021
Prudence Ndolimana	Concern Worldwide	Area C	April 26th 2021

Mahamat Koussou	AJRPS	Programme Coordinator	April 27th 2021
Methode Butoyi	FLM	Programme Manager	April 28th 2021
Laurent DeRuyt	Concern Worldwide	Country Director	April 28th 2021
Ngare Service	APLFT	Chargé des Programmes	April 29th 2021
Frédéric Pons	Concern Worldwide	DIZA Finance	April 29th 2021
Jean-Guy Kwuimi	FLM	Programme Director	April 30th 2021
Sandro Filippini	ACRA	Director	May 5 <sup>th</sup> 2021
Mbaidesse Mbainodji	ATURAD	Chef de Projet	May 13 <sup>th</sup> 2021

## Annex 3: Online Staff Survey Questionnaire



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