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NEWSLETTER

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Implementing Partners



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Project Title: Building Opportunities for Refugee and Host Community Self-Reliance

Project Location: Garissa County, Sub-counties of Dadaab & Fafi

Donor: European Union

Project Objective: To enhance displacement affected communities to access decent employment in Garissa County

Project Period: January 2024- June 2026

Project Beneficiaries: Refugees and Host communities in Garissa County

Implementing Partners:

- Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
- Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK)
- Pastoralists Girls Initiatives (PGI)
- Rights Organization for Advocacy and Development (R.O.A.D)
- Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS)

Project Sector:



Economic
Recovery

Aligned SDGs:



PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS



6,418

(3,162M, 3,256F)

Beneficiaries reached

Farmers Supported through training,
farm inputs and exchange learning
events

(489M, 815F)



1,304

Farmers reported utilizing the
dryland agriculture skills gained to
enhance nutrition and food security
at the household level

707

(254M, 453F)

96,845

Animals vaccinated against
Contagious Caprine
Pleuropneumonia (CCPP), Peste des
Petits Ruminants (PPR)



724

(434M 290F)

Beneficiaries attended **One Stop Shop (OSS)**
getting information on integrated access to
essential services from various government
agencies and private providers



101

(52M, 53F)

Persons with disability reached

562



Households reached through
targeted business and legal
information



1,242

Communities reached with
peacebuilding initiatives



275

(131M, 144F)

TVET trainees reported utilizing their skills to access or
sustain employment
with self-reported total earnings of Ksh. **2,913,256**

PROJECT SNAPSHOT:

The Area-Based Livelihoods Initiative 2 (ABLI G 2) is driving lasting change in Garissa County by expanding access to decent employment opportunities. Through a holistic approach, the project supports 7,640 direct beneficiaries with:

- ✓ **Skills development:** Providing TVET training for diverse employment
- ✓ **Climate-smart agriculture:** Promoting sustainable dryland farming practices.
- ✓ **Enabling a business support ecosystem:** by bringing together private and public actors to provide consultancies on business information including formalization, access to financial services and Business Development Services (BDS).
- ✓ **Economic Opportunities:** Enhancing the business environment for economic growth

In partnership with government institutions and the private sector, ABLI II is helping to build a resilient local economy, promoting self-reliance for both refugee and host communities through decent employment.

PROJECT OUTCOMES:

- **To strengthen the capacities of refugees and local individuals to build and utilize their skills to find and sustain employment and link into market systems.**

Out of the 1,993 beneficiaries reached (827 male, 1,166 female), 49%, totaling 989 individuals (385 male, 597 female) are now utilizing their skills and have collectively earned Ksh. 4,459,026, demonstrating the impact of skills training (TVET & Agriculture) on employment creation and income generation.

- **To create sustainable and expanded linkages to finance for MSMEs in Dadaab**

The project has fostered a strong business support ecosystem, resulting in 84 new business accounts, 64 KRA PINs, 57 DRS permits to ease entrepreneurs' movement, 79 county business permits, 87 business advisory sessions by Inkomoko, 98 businesses supported on digital marketing by KNCCI, and 21 VSLAs registered.

- **To address the enabling environment and systemic barriers that limit self-reliance of refugees and host individuals**

The project continues to tackle emerging barriers to an enabling environment by facilitating engagement between duty bearers and community structures (rights claimants).

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT:

Security:

Minimal threats reported, enabling uninterrupted and smooth field operations.

Weather:

Calm and cool conditions with occasional light showers supported field mobility and contributed to the timely implementation of planned activities.

Funding:

Despite reduced funding levels, teams adapted by limiting field movements and maximizing collaboration with community structures. This approach ensured project activities were completed on schedule.



Dressmaking class in session in Fafi

KEY LEARNINGS:

- **Collaborating:** Joint planning and resource sharing have proven essential for effective activity implementation, especially in resource-constrained contexts. Initiatives such as the One-Stop Shop and community exhibitions demonstrate how shared efforts can maximize impact.
- **Cross-Learning:** Exchange visits, such as to the Makueni Dryland Resource Center, inspire farmers and expose them to practical, context-relevant techniques that enhance productivity and innovation in their own settings.
- **Peer-to-Peer Learning:** This approach has shown to be highly effective. Sessions where MSMEs shared their business models or personal experiences significantly boosted participant engagement. Learners connected more deeply with peer facilitators, especially when complex concepts were presented using relatable, local examples.
- **Coordination:** Strong coordination with implementing partners and the County Government has enhanced the sustainability of outcomes, optimized resource use, and expanded outreach, for example, during mass livestock vaccination campaigns.
- **Partnerships and a market systems approach:** By embracing partnerships the project has mapped both public and private actors present in the Garissa DAC ecosystem, engaging and facilitating them to provide business information and other support services to MSMEs. This has created a business support ecosystem that is sustainable through platforms like the One Stop Shop.



RCK team guiding a CBO on registration in Dagahaley

LOOKING AHEAD: AUGUST - DECEMBER 2025

- **Advocacy Engagements:**

Two structured county-level engagements are underway, with additional activities planned for Q4. Continuous advocacy around the Shirika Plan remains a central focus.

- **Policy Brief Launch:**

Final preparations are ongoing for the launch of the Policy Brief on the Cost of Doing Business in Garissa County. This will provide key insights to inform future county-level economic policies.

- **Devolution Conference (Aug 12–15, Homa Bay):**

Project teams will participate in this high-level forum to advocate for the socio-economic inclusion of refugees and host communities within devolved governance frameworks.

- **Digital Tools Rollout:**

Short informational videos on business registration, civil documentation, and KRA processes will be launched. Complementary brochures are also being developed and translated for wider reach.

- **Expanded One-Stop Shop Sessions:**

Due to increasing community demand, an additional One-Stop Shop session is scheduled for August to provide integrated services and information.

- **VSLA Digitization:**

Ongoing efforts to digitize records of Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and link them to formal financial institutions to enhance transparency, access, and financial inclusion.

- **Mass Group Registrations:**

The project is facilitating mass registration of community groups in collaboration with the Social Development Officer. Activities include pre-registration training, group management sessions, and formal certification.

- **Mass Livestock Vaccination:**

A large-scale vaccination campaign is planned to protect livestock and strengthen pastoral livelihoods for both refugee and host communities.

ABLI-G 2 SUCCESS IN ACTION



BREAKING BARRIERS WITH A NEEDLE AND THREAD: HOW ZEITUN IS TURNING HER DREAM INTO REALITY

At just 21 years old, Zeitun Mohamed is turning a lifelong dream into reality, one stitch at a time. A resident of Welmarer and a student at the Hagadera DRC TVET Centre, Zeitun is enrolled in a one-year Tailoring and Dressmaking course under the The Area-Based Livelihoods Initiative Garissa 2 (ABLI G2) Project.

Now in her second month of training, Zeitun is one of 27 participants in the program, which equips youth with practical, technical, and life skills to promote self-reliance and economic empowerment. “Joining this training was the best decision I’ve made. I’ve always wanted to learn how to sew and open my own business. This program has made that dream possible,” Zeitun shares proudly.

The project focuses on strengthening the livelihoods of young people and women from underserved communities. At the Hagadera DRC TVET Centre, experienced instructors guide students through both theory and hands-on learning in tailoring.

In just two months, Zeitun has already gained essential skills, including taking and recording accurate body measurements, drafting and cutting garment patterns, operating and maintaining sewing machines, and mastering stitching techniques like seams, hems, and darts. Each session builds progressively, helping learners like Zeitun grow in both skill and confidence.

“Our trainers are patient and passionate. They take their time to ensure we understand every step. I feel more confident each day,”



To ensure equitable access to training, the program provides transport support, which is crucial for rural learners like Zeitun. It also supplies all necessary learning materials, fabrics, thread, measuring tools, and machine access, at no cost to the students. “Transport support has really helped me. Without it, I wouldn’t have managed to come every day. This program has removed so many barriers for girls like me,” Zeitun adds.

Zeitun joined the program with clear, focused goals: to complete the one-year course, progress beyond Grade Three and earn formal certification, and launch her own tailoring business in Welmarer. She hopes to specialize in women’s and children’s clothing, particularly school uniforms, which are in high demand in her community. But her ambitions don’t end there. “I want to use my skills to earn a living and help others. When I succeed, I want to teach girls in my village so they can have their own income too.”

Though still early in her training, Zeitun’s journey already reflects the deep impact of the ABLI G2 project. With growing confidence and practical skills, she embodies the transformation that inclusive, localized livelihood support can bring. “Every stitch I make brings me closer to my dream. I am so thankful for this opportunity,” she says with a smile.

ABLI G2, funded by the European Union, continues to uplift and empower youth in Garissa County through hands-on, market-relevant training that addresses local realities. For Zeitun Mohamed, it’s more than just a course; it’s the beginning of something truly transformative.

SKILL TO SCALE: HOW MALAK TURNED VOCATIONAL TRAINING INTO A THRIVING BUSINESS

Malak Abshir Omar, a former beneficiary of the ABLI-G2 project's vocational skills training program, is a shining example of how quality training can unlock opportunity and drive innovation.

After completing his training, Malak launched his own electrical and electronics repair business in November last year. Since then, his journey has continued to gain momentum. He was recently named one of the top 10 finalists in the Africa Revolution Competition for TVETs in Innovation Skills, standing out among over 500 participants from 36 countries across the continent. As a finalist, Malak was awarded a \$1,800 prize in recognition of his creativity, technical expertise, and entrepreneurial spirit.



Malak & his classmates showcasing their trade during the one stop shop held in Dagahaley

Building on this achievement, Malak has now received an additional grant of \$1,000 to expand his business even further, marking another milestone in his growing career.

Malak's success highlights the tangible, long-term impact of the ABLI-G2 program in equipping youth with market-relevant skills and nurturing entrepreneurship. His journey reflects not only personal determination but also the power of inclusive, skills-based programming to transform lives and communities.

TOOLS OF CHANGE: HOW MOHAMED IS RECLAIMING HIS LAND AND HIS HOPE

For Mohamed Noor Hassan, farming has always been more than a livelihood; it's his identity, his legacy, and his hope for his family's future. At 59 years old, Mohamed, a father and lifelong farmer from Borehole 5 in Fafi Sub- County, has spent decades trying to coax life from the dry, cracked soil of northern Garissa with nothing but his bare hands and borrowed tools.

"In the past, we didn't have enough tools. Sometimes just two old hoes for the whole group," he recalls.

Years of harsh dry seasons and a chronic lack of resources had made farming an uphill battle with little reward. Failed harvests became common, and food grew scarcer. Mohamed began to question whether he could continue relying on the land to feed his children.

But hope arrived when the ABLI G-II project reached his village. Mohamed's farm group was one of eight in Borehole 5 selected to receive a complete set of essential farming tools; hoes, shovels, garden forks, pangas, rakes, watering cans, wooden handles, gloves, and gumboots. Simple tools, but powerful enough to transform a farmer's season and perspective.

"It's hard to explain what it felt like holding a new hoe in my hands. A real one, strong and ready. For the first time in years, I felt like a farmer again," Mohamed says, his voice steady with pride.



Essential farming tools distribution in Borehole 5

"We took turns digging. We shared watering cans. Most days, we gave up halfway because it was just too hard."

With new tools in hand, Mohamed has returned to his farm with fresh energy. The watering cans help keep crops alive during dry spells. The garden fork breaks through hard soil with ease. And the gumboots and gloves let him work longer hours in safer conditions.

Already, he's prepared more land than he ever has. He speaks of planting vegetables, with the hope of not only feeding his family but selling any surplus at the nearby market, a dream that once felt distant. "Farming is possible again," he says. "This is the kind of support we have needed for so long, not just handouts, but real tools to work with, to stand on our own."



Mohamed attending to his farm with his newly acquired farm tools

BRIDGING DIVIDES: HOST AND REFUGEE VOICES LEAD LOCAL PEACEBUILDING

The shift from unspoken tensions to shared understanding and collaborative problem-solving was a powerful outcome of a recent Social Cohesion and Conflict Management Education (CME) training under the ABLI-G2 project, Humanitarian, Disarmament, and Peacebuilding (HDP) sector.

Held in Garissa, the training brought together 21 participants (13 women and 8 men), from both host and refugee communities. Among them were religious and community leaders, dynamic youth, and empowered women, all united by a shared commitment to peace and coexistence.

The training was carefully designed to strengthen the capacity of key community actors in peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Recognizing that sustainable peace begins at the grassroots level, the DRC HDP team targeted individuals with significant influence within their communities. The curriculum covered a range of topics, from understanding the root causes of conflict and managing tensions, to effective communication, mediation techniques, and inclusive decision-making.

This intentional diversity helped break down stereotypes, encourage open dialogue, and foster mutual understanding between the two communities. The training's success was evident in several key areas. First, participants gained enhanced knowledge and practical skills, demonstrating a deeper understanding of conflict dynamics and greater confidence in applying conflict management tools.

Second, strengthened relationships between host and refugee community leaders fostered camaraderie and trust, essential elements for resolving shared challenges and building long-term cohesion. Third, participants reported increased confidence in their ability to contribute meaningfully to peacebuilding efforts in their communities.

Importantly, the training concluded with participants in co-developing community-specific action plans, outlining practical steps for promoting dialogue, addressing grievances, and preventing future conflicts. This collaborative planning process reflected a strong commitment to putting new skills into action.

The impact of DRC HDP's CME training goes far beyond the individuals in the room. Equipped with conflict prevention, management, and resolution skills, the participants now serve as peace ambassadors, mediating disputes, facilitating communication, and promoting harmony in their respective communities. This ripple effect strengthens social cohesion and builds resilience against conflict across both host and refugee populations.



Community members after attending a conflict management education (CME) in IFO Main

“The training was impactful, and the deliberate inclusion of participants from both host and refugee backgrounds is key to ensuring there are peace voices across the divide for inclusive peace,” says Mr. Dekow, Block Leader & trainee.



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