



photo credit: ILRI/Dorine Odongo)

Community participation in drought management

Introduction

Public participation is explicitly mentioned in Article 196 of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 and elaborated in the County Government Act, Public Finance Act, and Transition County Allocation Revenue Act No. 6 of 2013.

For Arid and Semi-arid Lands (ASAL), historical exclusion from mainstream development planning, as well as lifestyles that depend on mobility, participation in development planning is a new terrain that will take time to establish as a norm and yet it is crucial to ensure sustainability of development projects that build resilience to drought and other disasters.

Agencies working in the ASALs of Kenya have used various methods to promote community participation in drought management all of which have contributed immensely in ensuring drought management initiatives are anchored

on the realities of the ASALs. One such method that has been used with good outcomes in development planning in northern Kenya is the Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR).



INTERVENTION AREA

Disaster risk management, preparedness and effective response



LOCATION

Northern Kenya

Methodological approach

Community-Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) refers to a process in which communities are actively engaged in the identification, analysis, monitoring and evaluation of the risks, with the aim of reducing people's disaster risk and enhancing their capacities. It places the communities at the heart of decision-making processes and in the management of disaster risk reduction measures (Cordaid, 2013). It is a condition whereby a community systematically manages its disaster risk reduction measures towards becoming a safer and resilient community.

The UNISDR describes resilience as the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions (Cordaid, 2013).

Setting up a CMDRR programme, like other participatory processes is guided by set principles and aimed at specific goals. For CMDRR, the three guiding principles are partnership, self-reliance and sustainability. It is designed in a process facilitation versus task achievement dimensions. As a community progresses towards sustainability, the external agency reduces its involvement and eventually exits. The roles and processes of the two main actors are tabulated as follows:

Table 4: Summary of community participation process

ENTITY	Development Practitioner	Community People
STATUS	OUTSIDERS	INSIDERS
ROLE	Development facilitators as agents of learning	Development managers as prime movers of change
PHASE OVER STRATEGIC POSITIONING	Externally diminishing – letting go the inherent power of people	Locally self-empowering owning the process and the programme
FUNCTIONS ACCORDING TO PHASE OVER PROCESS	PROCESS FACILITATION DIMENSION	TASK ACHIEVEMENT DIMENSION
	Relationship Setting	Committing
	Engaging	Enhancing
	Disengaging	Institutionalizing
TASKS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Entry into the community & building rapport2. Maintaining purposeful relationship with the community3. Identifying & developing community leaders/ organizers & formation of core group4. Guidance & support to managing people's organization5. Exit or continued progression	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Participatory disaster risk assessment2. Community development of DRR strategy3. Community DRR Action Planning4. Organized community action5. Participatory monitoring, evaluation & learning6. People's organization gradually assumes full responsibility for DRR
GUIDING PRINCIPLES	Partnership, Self-Reliance, Sustainability	
UNDERLYING PHILOSOPHY	People-centered and participatory development philosophy imbued with integrity, shared responsibility, transparency and accountability	

How it was conducted in one community

The Ledero community contacted Community Organisation for Development Support (CODES), a non-governmental organisation working in Samburu district in early 2009. Discussions with them generated interest in CMDRR. A planning meeting with the community was conducted and participants for the Participatory Disaster Risk Assessment session were selected. Representatives included community

leaders, youth, women and men based on social and economic status. The CODES facilitators started the process by explaining the purpose of the assessment. The community then developed a resource map and went on to identify the hazards facing them and used proportional piling to rank them. Drought, conflict and human disease were ranked as top hazards. Vulnerability and capacity assessments for hazards were conducted to help the community develop contingency plans. The process took five days to complete.

CODES embraced CMDRR approach to community assessment and planning because it gives the community an insight into the real hazards they face, their vulnerability to these hazards and empowers them to plan and build capacities to cope with the hazards. During the CMDRR process, drought was ranked the most important hazard. Drought adversely affects the community because it limits their access to water.

After discussions on possible options of availing water to the community, the community proposed that support was needed for a second borehole and dam. They also suggested that small scale water harvesting at household level would go a long way in increasing water access during drought. However, the community knew that this option was for the wealthy in their midst and they would also need some assistance to buy the tanks and ridges to make this a reality.

In response to the findings, CODES with Cordaid support funded a water and food security program in which 24 corrugated iron sheet roofed houses were identified for water harvesting. In the drought of 2009, Ledero community lost about 70% of their livestock and this necessitated restocking among the most affected households. For this reason the community suggested during the planning meeting, that the tanks be exchanged with goats and sheep to form a restocking package.

The community developed the criteria to select houses to be used for roof water harvesting and households to be restocked. For water harvesting, they considered distance of house from water sources with those living far given preference. Other considerations were roof size for maximum yield, the owner's integrity and their participation in community welfare activities. In addition, household ability to purchase a tank was also considered where those with limited ability were preferred. They also considered the distance to the closest neighbours because the tanks were expected to benefit more than one household so those with more neighbours around them were selected.

The very poor, the widows and other female headed households were preferred for restocking. A 5,000 litres plastic tank was installed to harvest water from each roof. The task of buying and setting up the water tanks and the ridges was completed in January 2010. The lucky owners were able to benefit from the long rains – the tanks collected enough water for households to use in the next dry season. Each family that was selected to receive the plastic tank gave 10 sheep or goats to the community.

This totaled to 240 goats and sheep that formed the restocking package for 24 vulnerable households. Each household received 10 sheep or goats. The Samburu have a very effective social support system that helps them survive difficult situations. In the case of the tanks, a person may have a tank in the homestead, but they are expected to share the water with their neighbors.



photo credit: ILRI/George Wamwere-Njoroge

Examples of projects designed with community engagement

a) Asset Creation Projects established by WFP in Partnership with Communities and County Governments:

Asset Creation is intended to help food insecure households to get food while at the same time creating assets for themselves or for the community. The asset-creation initiatives contribute to improving the lives of families in increasing access to water for human and livestock use; increasing crop production and diversification of food sources; and increasing pasture production for livestock. The communities are mobilized to learn the skills and eventually own and maintain the assets. The social capital generated through working together in the groups under CMDRR and other participatory processes serves as a binding energy for the new initiatives.

In order to boost sustainability, WFP links the asset-creation projects, institutionalized government agencies and other development partners for a sustained, integrated set of development efforts, building on social capital to support livelihoods, drought-risk management, human capital, infrastructure, peace and security, and institutional development.

At community level, in typical community style, members who have gone through participatory planning form work groups of 10-15 people representing food insecure households and agree on a work programme for the agreed asset e.g. excavating farm ponds. This is done on merry-go-round style to ensure each one of the households gets a farm pond. Once the value of the new innovation is established and adopted by the community it becomes very easy for the community to replicate the technology. In one county, the project had planned to excavate 24 farm ponds in the period April 2016 to June 2016, but the community was so excited about the innovation that in the end the community had excavated 38 farm ponds.

b) Restoration of Kuro Bisan Owo Hot Springs in Merti, Isiolo.

The Kuro Bisan Owo Hot Spring is located within the Chari drought grazing reserve in Isiolo County of northern Kenya. Kuro hot springs were restored in November 2014 following

a participatory disaster risk reduction assessment (PDRRA), a variant of CMDRR. Following the assessment the restoration was jointly planned and led by the local community in Merti, and the Partners for Resilience (PfR) Programme. The findings of the PDRA conducted by PfR in March 2014 at Biliqo highlighted the environmental degradation due to unregulated use of Kuro hot springs through human activities and livestock use.

The participatory assessment revealed a number of direct impacts of the degradation of the hot springs including:

1. Inter-clan and inter-community conflicts among vulnerable pastoralists whose economic lifeline is the Kuro hot springs during times of drought;
2. Pastoralists experiencing long waiting periods at the watering points due to the hot spring's limited water flow.
3. Local communities suffering from waterborne diseases due to contamination of the water.
4. Human-wildlife conflicts, especially with elephants accessing the hot springs. The springs are located along their migratory route and breeding grounds.
5. Individuals trying to illegally exploit the community-owned Kuro hot springs as private wildlife conservancies and illegal bird shooting sites.
6. A dramatic reduction in the number of quail, which previously used the springs as a watering point and were an attraction for bird watching and sporting.

Local communities enriched the assessment by contributing diverse views and opinions on ecosystem management. In addition, their knowledge and skills were incorporated into planning and designing the restoration of the hot springs.

Based on the assessment findings, the PfR partners prioritized the restoration of Kuro hot springs as a flagship project. Its restoration aimed at promoting more efficient use of the existing water resources with the potential for contributing towards improving the livelihoods of pastoralist communities in Isiolo, Marsabit, Moyale and Samburu.

Local community contribution to the initiative was greatly helped by the earlier participatory assessment and included:



1. Desilting by excavating sand and soils from the source of the springs.
2. Construction of underground culverts to redirect water from the hot springs.
3. Construction of concrete water troughs for use by both livestock and wildlife.
4. Fencing the perimeter of the main hot springs to minimize intrusion by wildlife, especially elephants.

Successes, Benefits and Achievements

Successes of community involvement in building resilience are demonstrated in simple organizing around merry-go-round groups for mobilization of resources for community micro-credit initiatives, and complex irrigation projects in the semi-arid counties of Kenya. One such project where community involvement not only ensured good returns but also sustainability was the Smallholder Horticultural Development Project (SHDP) of the Ministry of Agriculture.

According to the project coordination unit, the success of the project designed to contribute to poverty reduction and enhance food security through, increased smallholder farm incomes creation of new job opportunities and increased horticultural product quality leading to better prices of farm produce can be attributed to one single factor – the formation of the nine Irrigation Water Resources Users Associations in the seven semi-arid counties where the project was implemented.

The other story of success in community participation is the use of the Dedha as a community institution for mobilization. Dhedha is the Boran traditional governance institution mandated with governance of pasture and water to serve the pastoralist over the Boran territory. After Kenya's independence this institution was weakened over time and its

strength to execute its mandate eroded as a result of formal administration that had no regard and recognition for such traditional institutions that existed before colonialism and anchored on traditional governance, principles and values.

The Adaptation Consortium invested in reviving this governance institution and system that community strongly identified and prioritised as one of the interventions to build their resilience. The system gives pastoral community an opportunity to manage their resources in more useful and effective way that will see them throughout the seasons.

The project supported a proactive community-based planning processes including a community resource mapping tool resulting in community members dividing their pasture land into; wet, dry and drought grazing reserves. This process gave the Dedha powers to execute community plans agreed upon by community members.

Additional information

IIRR, Cordaid. 2013. Building resilient communities. A training manual on community managed disaster risk reduction, Philippine

Contact Persons:

1. Abraham Barno – Project Coordinator, SHDP, Ministry of Agriculture
2. Patricia Aruwa - M&E Specialist, MoA. Email: achiengaruwa@gmail.com
3. Daniel Otero - M&E Specialist, MoA. Email: maziga2001@gmail.com
4. Jane Kiiru - ADA Project. Email: wanjikukiiru@gmail.com
5. Julius Akeno - ACP at NDMA. Email: akeno.julius@ndma.go.ke
6. Dr. Doyo Godana
7. Ikeny Kapua. Email: ikeny.kapua@wfp.org Tel: 0721777706
8. Randal Purcell. randall.purcell@wfp.org;
9. Charisse Tillman. charisse.tillman@wfp.org.

CONTACTS

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY ON DEVELOPMENT (IGAD)
P. O. Box 2653, Djibouti City, Djibouti
www.igad.int / www.resilience.igad.int



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations