



## **BUILDING RESILIENCE IN KENYA**

### **Summary**

The Horn of Africa Crisis in 2011 highlighted the vulnerability of poor people in the marginalised arid and semi-arid lands of northern and eastern Kenya to environmental, security and market shocks and stresses. DFID Kenya is investing in medium and long-term programmes to strengthen the ability of vulnerable households to withstand such shocks. To achieve this also requires these programmes to be able to flexibly respond to sudden spikes in need, which occur on a regular basis.

### **Context**

The arid and semi-arid lands of Kenya are among the poorest parts of the country. For example, 94% of people in Turkana live below the national poverty line. People are extremely vulnerable to shocks and stresses, including frequent drought events. They are routinely food insecure and rates of acute malnutrition regularly rise above emergency thresholds, becoming particularly severe when there are environmental, market or security shocks.

### **Country specific challenges**

Pastoralism is historically the traditional livelihood of people in the arid and semi-arid lands and is well-adapted to the climate. However, due to population and land use pressure, asset depletion linked to climatic and other shocks and inappropriate development interventions, many have started to abandon pastoralism as a way of life and settle in peri-urban areas with few livelihood opportunities.

The arid and semi-arid lands are chronically underdeveloped. Many aid programmes have historically focused on short term emergency aid, which has done little to increase the population's resilience to disaster. Over recent years there has been some increase in longer term drought management activities and the development of social safety net programmes, but there still remains a reliance on short term emergency assistance. This is scaled up in spike years, but is often too late.

What is needed is more medium and long-term investment to strengthen the ability of vulnerable households to withstand shocks and stresses, whilst also integrating the ability to respond to predictable future spikes in need from within these longer term programmes.

### **UK response**

DFID is supporting the Government of Kenya's strategies to "End Drought Emergencies" and build resilient households in the arid and semi-arid lands by increasing the links between the delivery of social services, disaster risk reduction, livelihood investments, social protection, emergency response, and creating the conditions for economic growth. This requires:

- flexible funding for early response on the basis of credible early warning;
- strengthening public and household assets to build better coping and adaptive livelihood strategies;
- supporting the private sector to create opportunities and stimulate growth; and
- creating institutions and agencies in national and local government that can deliver services to poor people in accountable and transparent ways.

DFID is responding to these needs through the following programmes.

The existing **Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP)** is at the core of DFID Kenya's resilience work and already reaches 420,000 of the poorest people in the arid lands with regular cash transfers. This is improving food security, helping people to keep hold of their assets during shocks and allowing better access to health and education services. In the proposed £118 million **HSNP Phase II**, which is currently under design, the number of beneficiaries will increase to 890,000.

Whilst HSNP provides the safety net for households, the new £14.3 million **Arid Lands Support Programme (ASP)** which is currently under design, will support the resilience of some 475,000 people. The programme will involve: the expansion of a pilot Index Based Livestock Insurance mechanism for poor pastoralists; support to community destocking in advance of a drought; improved fodder production and storage; support to government veterinary service delivery; and the building of community assets, such as water storage.

The cost effectiveness of this approach has been highlighted in the DFID funded Economics of Early Recovery and Resilience Study, which showed that every \$1 spent on disaster resilience resulted in benefits of \$2.9 in Kenya in the form of reduced humanitarian spend, avoided losses and development gains. It will also improve the ability of the Government to provide integrated assistance to poor people in the arid lands through a common registry of all households in the poorest counties and establish the conditions to allow a more diverse business environment. The ASP will include a resilience fund to provide additional resources, so that in bad seasons (when environmental triggers are breached) the number of HSNP beneficiaries and size of payments can be increased, whether supported by DFID or other donors.

A new £16.8 million three-year **nutrition programme** will treat more than 65,000 malnourished children and 10,000 women every year in the area. The programme will not only help them to recover, but also prevent acute malnutrition through improved access to micronutrients, as well as counselling on mother, infant and young child nutrition and care practices. The programme will also strengthen the resilience of the Government-led health system to prepare and respond to spikes in need. This will be through support to human resources, coordination, planning, monitoring, nutrition information systems and communication efforts. DFID and partners will also agree early warning indicators that, if breached, can lead to a programme budget revision (and if necessary consideration of additional funding) to support scaled up preparedness and response activities.

A new national-level **Education programme** (£25.2 million) has a strong focus on building schools and subsidising the costs of education in the arid lands. It will enable 200,000 more children to attend schools in the area by 2015.

An extended **Market Access for the Poor (MAP)** programme will help to strengthen market linkages and build the commercial enterprise base in the arid and semi-arid lands in a range of markets. A detailed scoping study is already underway on commercialised livestock markets that have an impact on pastoralists and is examining other market options. Around 60% of planned programme activity will take place in arid and semi-arid lands areas and the programme as a whole will reach over 540,000 beneficiaries.

### **Next steps**

- Greater and better-coordinated investment from the Kenyan Government and donors in the medium and long-term in the arid and semi-arid lands.
- Integration of predictable, flexible and cost-effective early response activities into development interventions.