

Strengthening the role of community level representatives in the implementation of the National Anti-Drought Strategy (EDE)

Dates 17th and 18th Jan 2018-Baringo
25th and 26th Jan 2018-West Pokot

Emerging from the need to prepare ward level contingency plans in Baringo and West Pokot Counties ahead of the predicted delay in rainfall and subsequent pouches of drought that will last up to around March 2018, KAS together with the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) in the two counties carried out a series of participatory community forum to assist the local communities in developing the said plans – a proactive process towards harnessing community governance.

While there is a County Drought Contingency Plan in place, none of the six targeted Wards of Emining, Marigat and Ilchamus for Baringo and Kacheliba, Sigor Kongelai/Pole has had their own local contingency fund contextualized to speak to their unique challenges of drought disasters and acute food shortages. Moreover, with the difficulties reported in the implementation of the county level contingency plan, the activities in both counties took an approach that was one based on consolidating the community drought preparedness plans (CDPP) with the inclusion of a contingency matrix section. This meant re-looking at the CDPPs or what is also referred to as community managed disaster reduction plans in Wards where this plan was availed; refreshing and deepening practical knowledge on concepts central to contingency planning and EDE. Participants were engaged to build scenarios based on the NDMA's EWS early warning update/outlook, grouped based on their various locations.

The activities during the planning phase by KAS and NDMA in the two counties were designed around two main objectives mainly: To strengthen the concept of contingency plan and drought preparedness in light of the forthcoming dry spell –Jan-March 2018 and secondly, to assess the current socio-economic and demographic status as well as to subsequently build context information on the early warning through actual contingency planning process.

More than 100 participants were engaged in each of the two counties with every target ward having an estimated number of 35 participants. The Community participants included government officials led by the local chiefs, locational CMDRR committee members or the Disaster Management Committees, County Ward Administrators, local politicians, opinion leaders and self-help groups among others.

Five CDPPs in Ilchamus, Koriema, Sigor and Kacheliba were reviewed and elements of drought contingency planning and budgeting were included. In Emining, Kongelai, the community participants were taken afresh through a number of sessions that helped them to understand how to classify and characterize the different hazards and prioritize short

term interventions, of course including interventions that would easily be conducted by them with merger resources. The activities in these two wards entailed selling the concept of the CDPP as well as helping the communities to come up with simple short term local contingency matrixes/plans that could be presented to the different government planning departments at the National and County levels. Nevertheless, the participants were given an opportunity during the plenary to make their own contributions based on existing local capacities and preparedness levels in respect to the biting drought.

KAS hopes that by development of these local drought contingency plans, the target communities led by the main actors in the field of drought disasters will be able to reduce the disaster response time, continue to identify current gaps in response capacity for purposes of planning in advance and foster a coordinated approach to drought response across the wards that will increase their chances of successful lobbying for resource allocation that will be informed by their own plans.