AFRICA REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON
DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Reducing risk, **raising** resilience

Risk reduction in practice: six stories of successful risk reduction during the Covid-19 pandemic

Workshop report: Africa Regional Workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction, December 2020

german humanitarian assistance
DEUTSCHE HUMANITÄRE HILFE

German Red Cross

Acronyms

ASB	Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund
ASDF	Africa Sand Dam Foundation
CDRF	Community Disaster Resilience Fund
CMDRR	Community-managed disaster risk reduction
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
DPM	Damp-proof material
FbF	Forecast-based Financing
GFFO	German Federal Foreign Office
GRC	German Red Cross
IDP	Internally displaced person
IEC	Information, communication, education
MHM	Menstruation hygiene management
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
LRRD	Linking relief, rehabilitation and development
PASSA	Participatory Approach to Safe Shelter Awareness
SRCS	Sudanese Red Crescent Society
URCS	Uganda Red Cross Society
VDMC	Village disaster management committee
VSLA	Village savings and loans association
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization

Acknowledgements

The stories and insights shared by workshop participants were inspirations and showed how DRR can make a difference even in the challenging times of Covid-19. Our gratitude goes to Blaise Bukuyi (Uganda Red Cross Society), Lukeka Shabani Papy (Bon Dieu dans la Rue, DR Congo), Sarah Abdelrahman (Sudanese Red Crescent), Harouna Doudou Talata Harouna (Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund, Niger), Chepkorir Agnes (Arche Nova, Kenya), Mouti Ndongo Emmanuel (CBM International, Cameroon), Blessing Njopera (Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund, Mozambique), Lilian Kendi Kang'ori (Africa Sand Dam Foundation, Kenya), Rakotondrazanany Fara Hanitriniaina Emilie (SAF/FJKM, Madagascar), Sebongile Hlubi (Lesotho Red Cross Society), Victoria Chifeche (CEDES, Mozambique), Allen Chaitezvi (CBM, Zimbabwe), and Ajore Stella Ekatan (Uganda Red Cross Society). Thank you for sharing your insights and contributions to vibrant discussions.

Contents

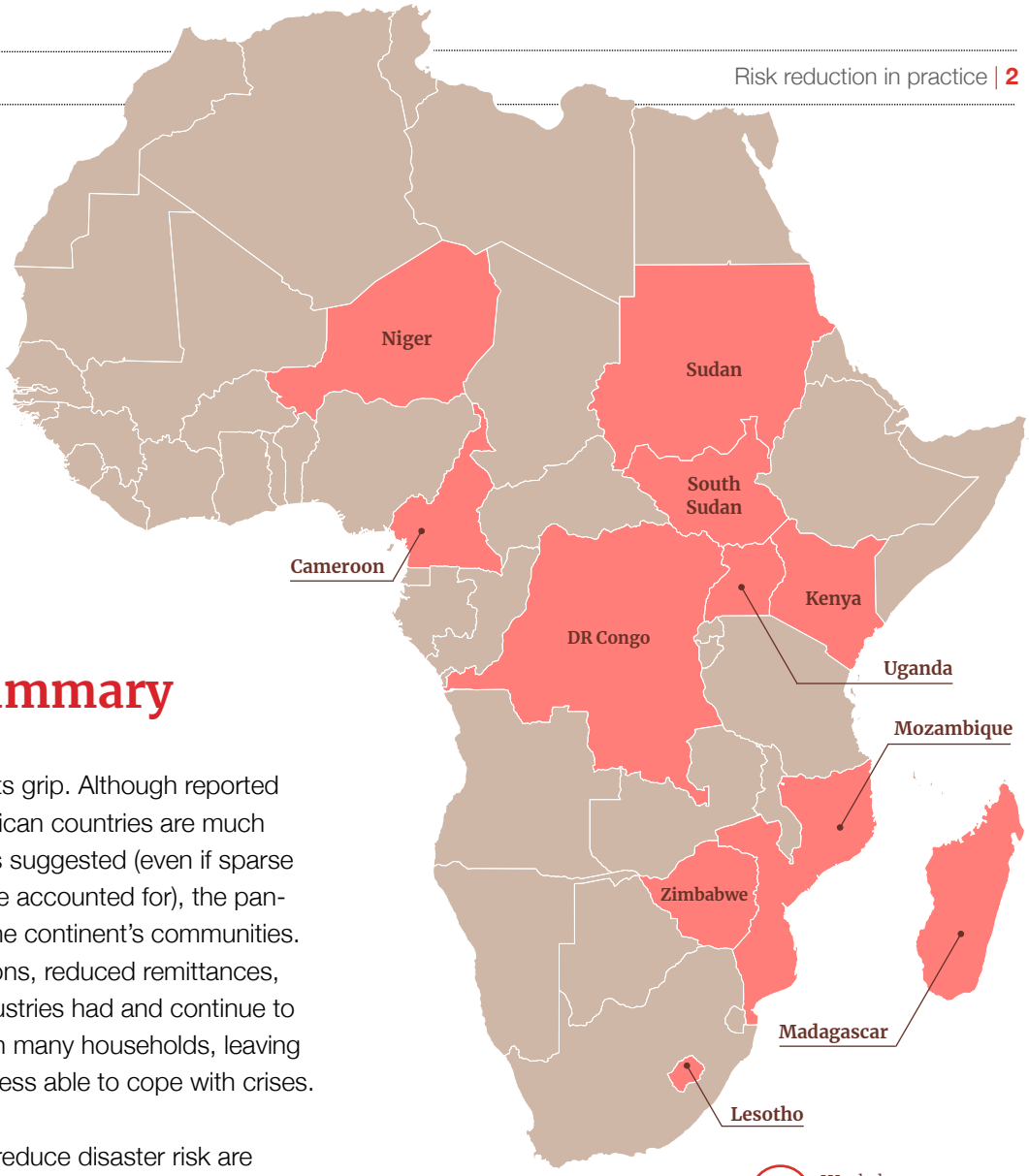
Report editor
Patrick Bolte, Banyaneer Consulting

Worksop facilitation
Patrick Bolte, Banyaneer Consulting
Matthew Bird, Banyaneer Consulting
Sara Azadegan, Banyaneer Consulting

Technical lead & support
Stefan Scholz, German Red Cross
Sabine Ehrke, German Red Cross
Liesa Sauerhammer, German Red Cross

This report was developed on the basis of good practice submissions from participants of the Africa Regional Workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction, held via Zoom in November and December 2020. The six practices in this report were selected by workshop participated. The workshop was funded by the German Federal Foreign Office and organised by German Red Cross. Workshop participants came from GFFO-supported organisations as well as their local partner organisations.

The Africa Regional Workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction included 14 participants from these 10 countries.



Workshop summary

Covid-19 has the world in its grip. Although reported deaths and infections in African countries are much lower than initial projections suggested (even if sparse data on excess mortality are accounted for), the pandemic put a heavy toll on the continent's communities. Restrictions, price fluctuations, reduced remittances, and job losses in many industries had and continue to have a damaging impact on many households, leaving them more vulnerable and less able to cope with crises.

Under Covid-19, efforts to reduce disaster risk are arguably more relevant than ever but also harder to pursue. In fact, how can humanitarian and development organisations operate and support communities when the communities cannot be easily reached or gathered?

At the 2020 Africa Regional Workshop, which shifted to the virtual realm in line with the Zoom-powered zeitgeist, the insights of the 14 participants proved inspirational. They showed how previous actions, operational readiness, and agility of project teams allowed organisations to quickly adjust project portfolios to address the challenges associated with Covid-19.

In **Madagascar**, SAF/FJKM mobilised its volunteers to sensitise and educate 300,000 people on Covid-19 precautions, while also helping to rehabilitate health centres and setting up hand-washing points. In **Kenya**, the Africa Sand Dam Foundation worked with its target communities to produce soap, face masks and tippy taps, while incorporating means to sustain outcomes (see case study A). In the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, Bon Dieu dans la Rue supported urban communities in Goma City through mass sensitisation campaigns on Covid-19 precautions and waste management. With vulnerable families often sifting through garbage dumps and careless disposal of needles and other medical consumables being common, they alerted communities on the increased risk.

Workshop resources are available here.

Context

The Africa Regional Workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) was part of a long-standing effort to facilitate exchange among DRR practitioners. The German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO) funds numerous humanitarian relief and DRR operations around the world and thus collaborates with implementing organisations and local partners. In Germany, implementing organisations have formed a disaster preparedness working group to facilitate the exchange of good practice and to enhance collaboration. As part of its cooperation with the GFFO, German Red Cross (GRC) organises regional

workshops in Asia and Africa, thereby extending this exchange and coordination among local staff and partners in disaster-prone countries. Previous workshops have been held in Manila (2017), Nairobi (2018) and Bangkok (2019).

Objectives and outline

The workshop aimed to a) **gain** insights on DRR trends and success factors, b) **facilitate** the exchange of practical experiences and solutions, and c) **identify** good practices that can inform DRR programming.

The outline (see below) featured two 'practitioners' marketplaces' for an open exchange of ideas and another session on specific lessons related to 'pathways through a pandemic'. Participants were also requested to summarise good practices (with guidance provided in week 1) and then had two weeks to submit their stories. In the second week of the workshop, these stories were presented in groups, then shortlisted and selected for inclusion in this report.

Three sessions stood at the start of the workshop — helping to frame ensuing discussions.

DRR: successes and failures

The first of these sessions focussed on the effectiveness of DRR so far: what works and why? The global trend in disaster-related fatalities (far fewer people now die in disasters than did in the past) suggests that efforts in early warning, preparedness and policy changes helped save lives. Storm-related fatalities, for instance, have fallen from 20,600 per year in the 1990s to 2,800 per year in the 2010s.

Reported damages and losses meanwhile are on the rise (they have tripled in the case of storms). With common under-reporting of such economic losses, disproportionate well-being losses amongst poor households, and exacerbated risk as a result of climate change, the argument was made that DRR must expand its focus from 'live vests and megaphones' to a broader approach of risk-informed development. Protecting livelihoods, as well as lives, is key.

AFRICA REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Session schedule

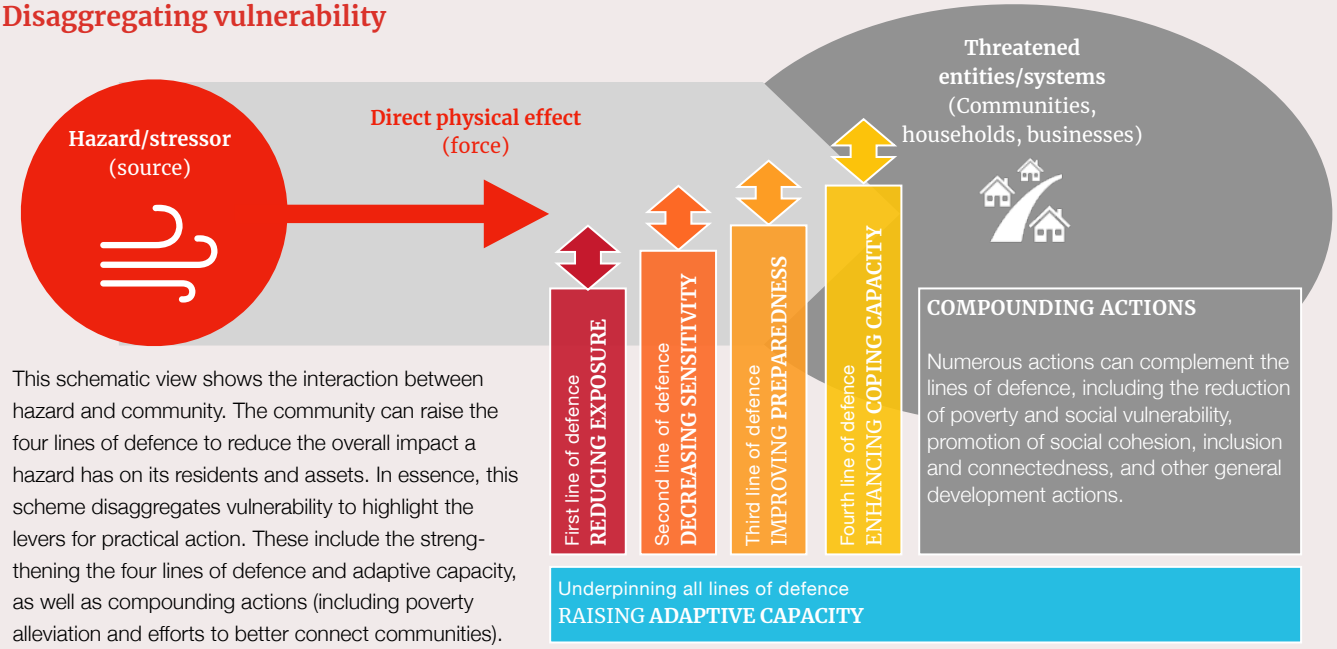
Funded by: German Federal Foreign Office

Organised by: German Red Cross

WEEK ONE			* East African Time (e.g. Nairobi, UTC +3h)
Timeline*	**MONDAY** November 23 [Session 1]	**WEDNESDAY** November 25 [Session 2]	**FRIDAY** November 27 [Session 3]
10.00 - 10.20 [20 minutes]	Introduction to the workshop: outline, rules, expectations Who's in the course?	Review quiz	Review quiz
10.20 - 11.15 [55 minutes]	Block 1.1 **Successes and failures of DRR (and what we can learn from them)** Input presentation (35 min) Plenary discussion (20 min)	Block 2.1 **Disaster risk reduction amidst the nexus and resilience** How DRR fits into different logics, and practical implications Presentation (15 min) Team work (25 min), results (15 min)	Block 3.1 **Challenges, solutions. Practitioners' marketplace (I)** An open exchange on practical challenges and possibly, how they were/could be tackled [short presentations by participants]
11.15 - 11.25 [10 minutes]	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break
11.25 - 12.20 [55 minutes]	Block 1.2 **Lines of defence. Disaggregating vulnerability** Presentation (10 min) Team work (30 min) Team work results (15 min)	Block 2.2 **It's gone viral. Pathways through a pandemic.** Presentation on the current and future impact of Covid-19 and the implications on DRR efforts (15 min) Team work (25 min), results (15 min)	Block 3.2 **Effective writing, introduction to the preparation of case studies** How to write effectively. What makes a case study useful. Guidance on homework/contributions for week 2.
12.20 - 12.30 [10 minutes]	Feedback, parking lot	Feedback, parking lot	Feedback, parking lot

WEEK TWO			* East African Time (e.g. Nairobi, UTC +3h)
Timeline*	**MONDAY** December 14 [Session 4]	**WEDNESDAY** December 16 [Session 5]	**FRIDAY** December 18 [Session 6]
10.00 - 10.20 [20 minutes]	Welcome back. Overview of case study submissions Outline for the week: selecting and enhancing case studies	Review quiz	Review quiz
10.20 - 11.15 [55 minutes]	Block 4.1 **Case study presentations (in teams)** Within the three teams, case study submissions are presented and discussed. (5 min presentation, 4 min discussion per case study)	Block 5.1 **Presentations to the plenary: case studies 1,2,3 and what we can learn from them** (9 min presentations, 9 min discussion each)	Block 6.1 **Challenges, solutions. Practitioners' marketplace (I)** An open exchange on practical challenges and possibly, how they were/could be tackled [short presentations by participants]
11.15 - 11.25 [10 minutes]	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break
11.25 - 12.20 [55 minutes]	Block 4.2 **Case study ranking** Each team ranks the case studies based on set criteria, and then selects the top two submissions. Teams suggest ways to improve them further (missing information, outline)	Block 5.2 **Presentations to the plenary: case studies 4,5,6 and what we can learn from them** (9 min presentations, 9 min discussion each)	Block 6.2 **Open session** What are other specific topics you would like to discuss? Write them in the wishlist section of the parking lot padlet by end of Day 4.
12.20 - 12.30 [10 minutes]	Feedback, parking lot	Feedback, parking lot	Feedback, parking lot

Disaggregating vulnerability



This schematic view shows the interaction between hazard and community. The community can raise the four lines of defence to reduce the overall impact a hazard has on its residents and assets. In essence, this scheme disaggregates vulnerability to highlight the levers for practical action. These include the strengthening the four lines of defence and adaptive capacity, as well as compounding actions (including poverty alleviation and efforts to better connect communities).

The relative success of DRR often remains in the dark due to two dilemmas: first, the absence of counterfactuals (what would have happened if we hadn't invested in risk reduction?) means that many successes remain silent. Deaths make the headlines, not the rather abstract number of people saved. The second dilemma concern the fact that investments in DRR are in the present, while the (often invisible) benefits materialise in the future if a hazard strikes.

Projects that include direct and tangible benefits (that materialise irrespective of hazard events) appear to be more effective and lead to more sustainable results. Other proposed success factors of DRR include:

- Robust and needs-based targeting,
- Sound understanding of local context,
- Building trust and local ownership,
- Project agility (flexibility to address emerging risks),
- High technical quality of all DRR measures, and
- Embedded enablers (close integration of stakeholders and alignment with frameworks).

Disaggregating vulnerability

The second session suggested that the concept of vulnerability may need to be disaggregated to better highlight the possible levers of action (see illustration above and further details in this presentation). Whereas most DRR projects featured strong components on preparedness (third line of defence), more action may be required to also strengthen other lines of defence if the focus was indeed to be shifted towards the broader notion of risk-informed development. Participants discussed this notion in three teams, with each focussing on a different hazard type (droughts, floods, storms).

Each team explored what actions were already being pursued to strengthen the lines of defence, and what additional actions could be added.

Although time was insufficient to explore all lines of defence conclusively, the results illustrated that many projects across the continent already featured aspects

- to **reduce exposure** (e.g through the community-produced face masks in case study A),
- to **decrease sensitivity** (e.g. through flood-resistant huts; see case study B),
- to **enhance coping capacity** (e.g. through half-moons that enable fodder production during droughts; see case study D), and
- to **raise adaptive capacity** (see for instance case studies C, E and F).

With regard to options that could be added, teams noted the importance of strong partnerships with government agencies as well as the need for longer planning timeframes. For instance, to reduce hazard exposure on a larger scale, the means, mandates, project durations and funds were often too limited; actions embedded in frameworks or carried out as part of longer-term master plans would thus be needed.

DRR and the nexus

The third session focused on linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD) and on the relation between DRR and resilience. Presented with the 'continuum' and 'contiguum' models (the former sees relief, rehabilitation and development as consecutive phases while the latter envisages them as overlapping components), participants were in strong favour of the contiguum concept and argued that DRR related to all components.

The preparedness for effective response (PER) model was cited as an example as to how structural capacity-strengthening was linked to better relief. Many local examples of such links were given; some are included in the case studies (e.g. the community-managed DRR approach in Somalia). Some raised the importance of donor flexibility to address emerging ands unforeseen needs in longer-term DRR efforts. Crisis modifiers were a suitable model to re-allocate or add project funds to relief or anticipatory efforts once pre-defined thresholds (e.g. for droughts) were triggered (see also case study A in the 2018 report). One participant poignantly argued that 'as you do development, put funds aside for relief.'

Participants gave several excellent examples as to how they adjusted projects to the new needs that emerged from the Covid-19 pandemic. A powerful example can for instance be found in story A, which shows how Africa Sand Dam Foundation tweaked their ongoing collaboration with target communities to help produce soaps, face masks and tippy taps (in addition to their regular longer-term activities).

On the link between DRR and resilience, it was argued that although most DRR efforts rightly focus on better risk management and thus helped to inherently raise resilience too, the scope of resilience was broader and also covered numerous other dimensions. DRR project managers should ensure that needs were holistically assessed and addressed through community-driven processes.

The arche noVa example of a community-managed process in remote and hard-to-reach parts of Somalia (see case study C) represents a case where community drive was especially strong (communities here succeeded in convincing Al-Shabab militias not to detonate the grenades that had already been placed on a new sand dam). Even though donor stipulations did often not allow for DRR projects to address all aspects of resilience, project teams should invest in some of the cross-cutting aspects such as connectedness, social cohesion, inclusion, and community capacity to reflect, adapt and plan ahead.

Covid-19 implications

The spread of SARS-CoV-2 primarily led to dual crises on health (infections, fatalities) and socio-economic conditions (reduced income, higher and additional costs, increased vulnerability).

For humanitarian and development organisations, the following secondary effects were noted:

- **Funding**: participants reported common funding challenges: prices and costs fluctuated; items such as masks and other personal protective equipment had not been factored in, and new activities had to be added to address emerging needs. Participants said that their organisations had been able to either re-allocate existing funding and/or receive additional funds to specifically address new needs and to roll out respective activities (see above).
- **Operations** were delayed as a result of restrictions for gatherings and travel. In some cases, project offices were closed. Organisations responded in several ways and moved online where connection speeds allowed. This included working from home, remote monitoring, the use of new 'tele-clinics' for eye care patients (Zimbabwe), and the formation of Whatsapp groups with communities (South Sudan). Others increased the use of local radio stations to raise awareness amongst communities (DR Congo) or shifted the modus of interaction (e.g. door-to-door visits instead of focus group discussions).
- **New needs**: In spite of the operational constraints, organisations were swift to address the new needs and able to help restrain the spread of the virus. In Madagascar for instance, some 300,000 people were reached by existing SAF/FJKM volunteers. In Kenya, the holistic and swift add-on component to ASDF's longer-term project proved ingenious. Overall, teams have been swift to address new needs. One issue of concern was the fact that evacuations would be much more difficult to organise safely under Covid-19 conditions. Preparations for Covid-safe evacuation management would be needed to this end.

Practical challenges, practical solutions

Several key challenges were raised by participants. **Cash-based programming** was discussed as a means to reach beneficiaries. In Lesotho, where Lesotho Red Cross had identified beneficiaries pre-Covid, electronic transfers were used throughout the pandemic. In other contexts, vouchers or physical cash were used. In Niger, the high cost was noted as the delicate security situation required armed guards for distribution.

Monitoring (both of cash distribution and other aspects of projects) often moved online: Kobo Collect and other platforms were increasingly used and often applied directly to beneficiary phones (without enumerators). Photo evidence was used to substantiate progress and adequate use of funds. Hotlines were also established or reinforced so that communities could submit feedback. In Uganda, South Sudan and other places, community feedback forms were applied.

Conclusion

The overall experiences shared during the workshop can perhaps be best summarised in three key insights.

First, project teams have experienced substantial challenges due to Covid-19 but also been swift in adjusting to the new normal. Where possible, the teams went online. In many contexts, illiteracy and unequal phone ownership remain a challenge in terms of reaching those most vulnerable.

Second, the experiences show that robust set-ups (strong and agile teams, links with target communities, volunteer networks) enabled the swift addition of actions to mitigate the Covid-19 impact on communities.

Third, the workshop and its modus proved effective at the cross-pollination of ideas. The dedicated and professional practitioners led vibrant discussions and called for similar opportunities for exchange in the future.

Zoom boom: participants and facilitators during the session on 'pathways through a pandemic'. Photo: P. Bolte

A Africa Sand Dam Foundation (ASDF)

Of soap, masks and tippy taps

Resilience and risk reduction during the pandemic

Community members receiving a sanitation and hygiene training in Kenya, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Photo: ASDF

Africa Sand Dam Foundation (ASDF) quickly adjusted to the 'new normal'. The organisation designed a comprehensive approach to help partner communities cope with Covid-19.

By Lilian Kendi Kang'ori Africa Sand Dam Foundation

Poor hygiene and sanitation practices are a leading cause of death in Kenya. According to the WASH Joint Monitoring Report by World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF in 2019, 59% of Kenyans have access to basic water services whilst 29% have access to sanitary services.

Inadequate water supply and insufficient knowledge of the significance of proper hygiene and sanitation practices in dealing with communicable disease outbreaks such as Cholera and COVID-19 pose a huge risk to the livelihoods and wellbeing of people in vulnerable rural communities. Safely managed WASH trainings are critical in mitigating harsh health impacts such as communal transmission of the virus and reducing exposure within the communities.

The challenges

The onset of Covid-19 in Kenya elicited many mixed reactions among Kenyans, as it caught everyone off-guard. The government acted swiftly: it imposed a variety of guidelines and protocols that seemed very foreign to many. These included lockdowns, cessation of movement, ban of social gatherings, closure of schools, wearing of masks in public places, use of

sanitizers, hand washing for at least 20 seconds when they are dirty, and observance of social distancing.

Comparatively low population density and the existence of their own food production played in favour of vulnerable rural communities. However, they were much less prepared to deal with the direct and indirect impacts of the crisis than most communities in the main cities.

For this reason, Africa Sand Dam Foundation (ASDF) stepped in to offer WASH trainings to communities in south-eastern Kenya (Machakos, Makueni and Kitui counties) to reduce their exposure to the virus, decrease sensitivity and vulnerability, enhance their coping capacity, and also to raise their adaptive capacity in dealing with the global crisis.

The actions

ASDF approached the communities through entities called self-help groups. These are groups of people who had already set common goals that they aimed to achieve. ASDF came in to support them with technical and hardware interventions that enabled them to better cope with the disasters that they may commonly encounter in the area.

During this pandemic, we took up the following actions to raise the resilience among the communities we work with:

Door-to-door campaigns: At the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic, we conducted door to door campaigns among the group members as refreshers on what needs to be done — hand washing with soap and clean water, distributing masks, training people on how to make their own masks, and issuing informational posters on preventive measures against Covid-19.

Covid-19 sensitisation trainings: Within the communities we work, we delivered training courses to improve preparedness in case of a second wave of outbreak. We liaised with the local authorities to ensure they were aware of our social gatherings. We observed the regulations and protocols set by the national government that called for the wearing of masks, observing social distancing and washing hands.

Community members were trained on soap making practices to ensure they could make soap and use it for hand washing. We provided them with raw materials

Community members preparing soap during a Covid-19 training to support hand washing. Photo: ASDF

that were sufficient to make at least 60 litres of soap. Participants could then subdivide the soap amongst themselves, depending on the number of group members present during the training.

Each member would carry three to five litres back to their homes to support with hand washing at the household level. The raw materials we provided for them were readily available in their markets, and we encouraged community members to work as a group and prepare soap that they could sell to other locals — thereby generating income that could help to purchase more raw materials and cushion them during this crisis.

Hand washing stations: The WASH team also trained the community members on how to create hand washing stations with locally available materials that would include four sticks, a nail, a ten-litre jerrycan and a string. This was effective and sustainable as the members could successfully create the tippy taps on their own after having been trained. The materials were readily available to them at no cost at all.

A local resident washes her hands at a locally made hand washing tippy tap in Kenya. Photo: ASDF

Community members holding their hand washing buckets. Photo: ASDF

Buckets and training: To support hand washing at the household level, ASDF supported the distribution of hand washing buckets to all community members and conducted sanitation and hygiene refresher trainings to ensure community members are familiar with proper hand washing procedures.

Making masks: Following initial distribution of masks by ASDF, members were also taught on how to make their own reusable masks using clean pieces of clothes. This was geared to enhance their coping capacity, enabling people to protect themselves and to earn extra income from sales.

Masked up at meetings. Photo: ASDF

Sand dams and shallow wells: As its name suggests, sand dams and associated shallow wells are the hallmark of ASDF activities, representing an effort to address the issue of water scarcity in Sub-Saharan regions, including those of south-eastern Kenya.

We ensured that community members had abundant supply of water throughout the pandemic by engaging our monitoring and evaluation team in collaboration with the construction team to conduct surveys on the functionality and operation of the water points — ensuring that all communities had access to clean and safe water.

Any water sources that required repair or maintenance were immediately repaired to safeguard water access for all community members during the pandemic.

Villagers watering their vegetable garden using water from a sand dam project. Photo: ASDF

Seeds: To furthermore ensure that the communities were food secure, we promoted and distributed drought-tolerant seeds for planting on their farms. Over the years, the community members have been receiving trainings on climate-smart agricultural practices such as establishing vegetable gardens. These helped provide a stable food supply for community members.

The results

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we reached 19,600 community members through trainings and follow-up visits. Disaster risk reduction was an integral part of our goal. This was achieved as community members were equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills that enabled behaviour change. During monitoring visits, it became evident that these behaviours were largely observed.

Reviewing the project outcomes through the lens of the 'lines of defence' model, we found that all lines were successfully addressed:

- **Reducing exposure** (first line of defence): making masks available on a wider scale (both through direct distribution and by teaching community members to produce masks) combined with effective training that led to a substantial uptake of mask-wearing, led to

reduced exposure to Covid-19. All the homesteads that we visited had several hand washing points set up in their homes. The parents had also taught their children on hand washing practices. Wearing of masks was now a habit that was adopted keenly by the community members. Residents were found to wear their masks at all times.

- **Decreasing sensitivity** (second line of defence). The sand dams and shallow wells that had been constructed through the project reduced the sensitivity to drought. The associated promotion of vegetable production and drought-tolerant seeds also made communities less sensitive to food shortages and price fluctuations.
- **Improving preparedness** (third line of defence): Through numerous trainings, community members gained the necessary knowledge and skills that are key in fighting against the virus.
- **Enhancing coping capacity** (fourth line of defence): The newly developed skills in making soap and masks allowed community members to sell their products and make an income from products that are in high demand during the pandemic. With this new income stream, they enhanced the coping capacity, enabling them to better cope with the health and economic crisis.

Success factors

- **Pre-existing relations**: by the time the Covid-19 pandemic started, ASDF already had strong exisiting relations with the target communities. This allowed for a swift uptake of the new activities.
- **High relevance & low cost:** soap, masks and tippy taps were highly relevant to communities; it was easy and cheap to produce these items. This also allows for further continued production without support from ASDF.
- **Strong project team:** the project team quickly reflected on the emerging needs and was swift to adjust the project portfolio to the new context.

The lessons

We need to be well prepared and have the knowledge and skills as well as emergency funds to cater for unexpected risks, threats and crisis that may endanger the vulnerable communities that we work with.

Step by step: making soap

Video guide

Watch the soap making tutorial here that ASDF has prepared (8:57min).

Ingredients

- Industrial salt
- Ungerol
- Caustic soda
- Ufacid
- Booster
- Preservative

Procedure

1. Mix 1 kilogram of industrial salt and 1 litre of ungerol (fatty alcohol ether sulphates) in a large basin.
2. Stir in one direction for 15 minutes until the salt particles integrate entirely and the composition gets milky.
3. Add 4 litres of water as you stir for 15 minutes, mixing it carefully step-by-step with a cup.
4. Stir the mixture until no more bubbles are visible.
5. Carefully add 0.5 litres of sulphonic acid.
6. Stir continuously until all lumps have dissolved.
7. After approximately 20 minutes of stirring, add another 4 litres of water and keep stirring until all bubbles are gone.
8. Add 10 grams of caustic soda (sodium hydroxide) and another 4 litres of water.
9. Keep stirring.
10. After 15 minutes, add dye, foam booster, and preservatives (optional) to the mixture. Note: Do not add too much colour, as it will affect the colour of the hands after washing!
11. Keep stirring and add another 4 litres of water.
12. 15 minutes later, add perfume (optional).
13. Add 8 litres of water.
14. Stir until all bubbles are completely gone.

B Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS)

Elevated.

How flood-resistant huts raised resilience in Uganda

Completed flood resistant hut for one of the community members in Ngariam sub-county, Katakwi district". Photo: URCS

With minor adaptations to traditional designs of huts, Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) helped to decrease sensitivity to floods: while communities are still exposed to annual flooding, they are less affected.

By Ajore Stella Ekatan | Uganda Red Cross Society

Following the introduction of the Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness (PASSA) to Uganda in 2007, URCS applied PASSA as part of the Integrated Climate Change Adaption (ICCA) project that it implemented between 2011 and 2017 in partnership with German Red Cross (GRC). ICCA featured the promotion of flood-resistant huts, climate-smart agriculture and forecast-based financing (FbF).

As a result of the project, the number of annually flood-displaced families fell by 68%. Resilience was further strengthened as communities adopted safe post-harvest food handling techniques. The construction of flood-resistant huts proved successful and sustainable, and helped redefine the Uganda Shelter Strategy.

Residents of project communities continue building new flood-resistant huts today, thereby expanding the benefit beyond the initial set of project beneficiaries.

The context

Uganda's Teso sub-region lies in the cattle corridor, a low lying stretch in the country's east that is one of the most severely affected by climate change.

The region is hit almost every year by flooding and water logging during the two rainy seasons of March, April, May (MAM) and September, October, November (SON). This regularly causes massive damages to people, property, houses, crops, animals, and infrastructure. The region also experiences increasing environmental degradation through deforestation and overgrazing, which exacerbates the negative effects of climate change.

Livelihoods are mainly based on subsistence farming and livestock rearing. The region is very vulnerable socio-economically; poverty level estimates are well above the national average.

Through the ICCA project, URCS taught Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) team members how to build safer shelters in the two most flood-prone areas of Katakwi and Amuria.

The challenges

Floods come with adverse effects that affect communities' entire livelihoods. The PASSA approach sought to minimise adverse effects of the recurrent floods and water logging.

Prior to the project, flood-affected families would be forced to seek refuge in safer public institutional areas within the community, such the sub-county headquarters, schools or churches.

This routine displacement from one's home could cause loss of property in the process, disruption of normal livelihoods and social cohesion that caused stress. For some families, this displacement would extend over several weeks.

The project sought to reduce exposure of households and the risk of homes being washed away and destroyed. The affected community members had limited or no options of relocation to better areas.

The project sought to improve community preparedness through construction of the flood-resistant huts. It sought to develop the capacity of the locals in reducing shelter-related risks by raising awareness and enhancing skills in collective analysis, decision making and learning at community level.

A girl stands in front of their house – one of the households usually displaced by floods in Ngariam sub county, Katakwi district." Photo: URCS

The actions

Using the PASSA approach, we:

- **trained** CBDRR groups in each village) in the construction of safe shelters (through training of trainers courses).
- **constructed** prototypes shelters. These were erected within the each community.
- **mobilised** the community and sensitised residents in meetings on the benefits of the new approach of construction. The communities understood and appreciated the approach. CBDRR groups and community facilitators were told to identify households that were ready to carry out construction.
- **distributed** technical awareness posters. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) posters were generated in the local language of Ateso, providing technical details on the construction of flood-resistant shelters:
  - The house and foundations should be elevated.
  - Foundations should be built with a large plinth beam of wattle and daub. This would need to be repaired by house owners after each small flood.
  - A water-proof barrier should be put on foundations to protect walls and floors which are made of adobe blocks.
  - Walls made of sun-dried mud blocks should be conical in shape
  - Appropriate materials to build more resistant earth blocks should be identified. Examples are clay from termite hills and mud mixed with cow dung to protect against termites.

- Any timber in direct contact with the earth should be treated to protect it from termites.
- **verified** the identified beneficiaries
- **distributed** construction materials, i.e damp-proof materials of 15 meters, jerrycans, trowel, brick mould, panga, spade and sisal rolls.
- **ensured** that communities rebuilt more flood resistant shelters. Communal and individual tool kits were distributed, and both CBDRR group members and other residents took part in the construction of flood-resistant huts.

The results

There was clear evidence of improved flood resilience among those villages where flood-resistant shelters had been constructed.

"Whenever floods arrive, I shelter some of our colleagues who have not constructed flood-resistant huts. I have asked them to build their own houses and if they want me to help them, they don't have to pay me."

Community member with a flood-resistant hut [ICCA Impact Assessment Report]

The number of families routinely displaced by floods has been greatly reduced. Some 7,458 flood-resistant huts have been constructed across 96 villages. These families were able to continue with their normal livelihoods despite regular floods. Without the seasonal displacements, livelihoods improved: families no longer had to rebuild or renovate homes after a flood and were thus able to save money. Normal life continued, and less trauma and social disturbances were observed.

CBDRR member and the community members construct the foundation of a flood-resistant hut. Photo: URCS

The capacity of communities and households was strengthened; as a result, sensitivity to floods and flash floods was reduced. Communities are now better prepared for floods.

Village savings and loans associations (VSLA) were formed and integrated in the PASSA approach. Through VSLA meetings, members were able to get information on early warning, increase savings, and improved livelihoods, social cohesion, and safety nets.

The lessons

- **The integration of local knowledge helped communities to embrace the approach.** A simple technical solution was used, based on some improvements to traditional construction methods. Being a participatory approach, the technology introduced used local building knowledge that was customised to cater for the existing "traditional huts"– symbols of identification for indigenous Teso communities.
- **Training** of community-based disaster risk reduction (CBDRR) groups through ToTs who in turn rolled out the approach to other community members turned out very effective.
- Close **monitoring**, supervision and data collection by URCS volunteers and staff was critical for the success of this project.
- **The combination of communal and individual kits helped URCS to target more families.** Damp-proof material (DPM) and other materials like jerrycans, trowels, brick moulds, pangas, and spades were first given to household who had completed the foundation. The participatory approach empowered community members to work hard and own the achievements.
- **Meaningful community stakeholder engagement** in the PASSA approach greatly contributed to the success of the project. It led to increased ownership and sustainability.
- **Top-level endorsement**: In 2017, the Minister of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response visited villages of Ngariam sub-county in Katakwi district. He saw households without PASSA huts

displaced at the sub-county headquarters. Yet, about 200 households within the same village with PASSA huts were peacefully settled in their homesteads. He requested URCS to continue lobbying for funds to support the facilitation of the PASSA approach in the region and possibly roll it out to the other Teso region of Kumi and Bukedea (which are also flood-prone).

In summary, this PASSA approach has been tested and proved worthy to build people's resilience as far as floods and its effects are concerned.

If funds could be availed, it would be prudent to have it rolled out in others flood-prone parts of the country, such as Kasese, Bundibujo, and Ntoroko.

C arche noVa

Community-managed risk reduction

Strengthening resilience in the fragile context of Somalia

RESILIENCE GED PROJECT

Risk mapping in action. Photo: arche NoVa

Local ownership is always critical to sustainable outcomes. In the fragile context of southern Somalia, arche noVa has been applying an approach that paid particular tribute to keeping the community at centre stage.

By Chepkorir Agnes arche noVa

Natural and human induced disasters adversely affect thousands of people every year, especially in fragile regions emerging from decades of conflict as is the case of Somalia. Since 2019, arche noVa has been including a new approach in all of its projects in East Africa. Its goal is to build resilient, resistant and safe communities that exhibit high levels of readiness to face and cope with any hazards and disastrous events.

The **Community-Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR)** approach is a community-led process to enable communities to 'systematically build back better'. Effective autonomous community organisations are better placed to advocate for social change.

As an NGO, we support the members of a community to obtain the benefits that they desire through their collective participation in the identification, planning,

implementation and evaluation of disaster risk reduction measures. On DRR, we are guided by the Global Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030), which was signed by the German Government.

The context

In this text, we describe one of our CMDRR experiences in the framework of a transitional aid interventions. The Resilience Gedo project has been implemented in four districts (Belet Hawa, Garbaharehey, South Bardeere and Luuq) of the Gedo region (Jubaland State in southern Somalia). Somalia is a fragile context — here, it is challenging to identify durable solutions.

The project focuses on riverine and pastoral communities as well as internally displaced persons (IDP) living in settlements and their host communities. It seeks to enable communities to better resist and recover from minor shocks and stresses by

- **strengthening** their resilience strategies and response plans,
- **increasing** their access to clean water, and
- **diversifying** their livelihood capacities.

The challenges

Somalia has witnessed over two decades of conflict, violence, human rights violations and natural disasters, all of which have triggered repeated waves of displacement.

In south-central Somalia, some areas are still under the control of the Al-Shabaab militia. Several households are acutely vulnerable, with insufficient assets, income sources and social safety nets. This situation is having serious consequences, including the destruction of communal infrastructures, protection violations (e.g. children recruited by armed forces/groups, gender-based violence, forced displacement or evictions), and depletion of household monetary and physical assets. Continual exposure to drought and floods has degraded natural resources, thereby further eroding community resilience and fuelling conflict.

With vulnerability to shocks thus increased and coping mechanisms at the household and community levels overstretched, DRR interventions were required.

The actions

Our DRR approach places the community at the centre of the entire process to determine their own vision, power and to define their possible solutions.
We believe that there is no linear model to pass from humanitarian aid to development.

Strengthening the resilience of people is one strategy in line with the LRRD (Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development) and humanitarian-development nexus concepts. Arche noVa is convinced that the resilience of households and communities can only be achieved by balancing the need to provide humanitarian assistance with the need to build community capacity against shocks.

For this reason, the target communities in the Gedo region are supported to assess their risks, take effective preparedness measures and have a timely response to minimise risk of disasters — with no or minimal external support. The DRR key activities in place can be summarised as follows:

CMDRR focus groups. Photos: arche NoVa

DRR capacity building

Capacity building on DRR was provided to arche noVa staff as well as to partners and government agencies working in Gedo region. The main purpose was to strengthen the institutional capacity of the organisations, identify strategies and actions to implement innovative approaches to reduce disaster risks, and increase communities' resilience against common hazards.

Participatory DRR assessments (PDRA)

PDRAs have been carried out with the communities and are part of an extremely useful process to understand the nature, intensity and behaviour of past hazard events in specific locations. The PDRA process is sequential; it includes the hazard assessment, vulnerability assessment, capacity assessment, and the risk analysis.

The practice involves all community members (men, women, children, and people with disabilities). The elderly participants share vital information and experience about the past, while the presence of youth in group discussions ensures that the experience is passed on to the next generation.

The community lists hazard events over the past ten years, describes the warning system, the damages that were caused, the response to disasters, the relief and rehabilitation process, the traditional methods of coping mechanisms, as well as current gaps in management of the hazards.

The lessons learned are then presented and analysed. The assessment and identification of potential hazards are done in the simplest language possible for better understanding (preferably vernacular).

Steps in the hazard assessment:

- Community social map can be drawn by the community divided in groups. It should be done using local materials as leaves, stones, sand, twigs.
- Identification of the hazard;
- Hazard prioritisation through voting; and
- Characterisation of the identified hazard using local language names.

During the identification and hazard ranking, it is important to use and discuss in the local language to allow the people to understand and participate. The activity can be realised in plenary sessions with the entire community, or in focus group discussions.

The community risk analysis map is developed, keeping in mind the community's inbuilt strength, social collective intelligence, and their capacity for handling disasters.

The community resource analysis and vulnerability prioritisation takes into consideration the infrastructural and financial resources, individuals with specific skills, local institutions, and people's knowledge.

CMDRR plans and risk reduction groups

Two initial steps are pursued following the assessment:

- The definition of a plan for risk reduction measures with the community.
- The formation of risk reductions groups to champion the risk reduction measures.

An important feature in CMDRR is the set up of a Village Disaster Management Committee (VDMC) that is composed of various stakeholders within the community — including the local administration, women and youth groups, people with special needs, and civil society groups.

VDMCs are tasked:

- To **develop** a community-based early warning system, a "midway" between traditional and formal early warning systems that measure key indicators on a translated scale. Information can be used internally within the community and transmitted externally to other communities.
- To **prepare** contingency plans and community coping mechanisms which can be strengthened and supported to address urgent community priorities while simultaneously reducing exposure to shocks by supplementing existing and traditional coping strategies with the diversification needed for adaptability.
- To **account** for and to maintain the inventory of community-based disaster preparedness materials.
- To **organise** evacuation drills, storage of relief supplies and trainings for first responders.
- To **facilitate** a resource analysis with the wider community, identifying locally available assets and resources that can be utilised before, during and after disasters.

The results

In the ongoing Resilience Gedo project, the target groups have become more resilient to the following chronic and imminent shocks:

- **Drought**: the target communities and IDP settlements have more high-quality sustainable water availability for human and livestock consumption throughout the year. This is a result of the rehabilitation and construction of water points (boreholes and shallow wells) and rainwater harvesting systems as sand dams (first ever of its kind in Somalia), rock catchments, school water tanks and water catchments.
- **Floods**: households and communities affected by floods have developed plans to identify their hazards and vulnerability and find durable solutions (i.e. knowing where to go in the event of floods as well as the dos and don'ts when the floods strike). The project improves the physical protection of water points, river embankments and communal WASH infrastructures against flood damage.
- **Cholera and COVID-19 epidemics**: improving access to WASH facilities and solid waste management in IDP settlements and villages, and the promotion of hygiene practices in schools, health centres and communities is drastically reducing the risks of COVID-19 infections, cholera and other waterborne diseases.
- **Social exclusion of girls and women:** as a DRR measure, the arche noVa project supports all people, in particular girls and women, to improve their hygiene practices to decrease infections and school dropout rates. Concepts such as Menstruation Hygiene Management (MHM) are discussed with girls in schools and women in the villages. Detailed hygiene needs of women and girls including sanitary pads are provided and specific MHM latrines built. As a result of these measures, many girls are now in school and the rates of absenteeism have greatly decreased.
- **Food insecurity:** improved food security has become possible through adequate water availability for livestock and agriculture, combined with income-generating measures. Higher yields and incomes as well as cost and time savings through better water access and health of community members has driven these improvements.

Some 2,750 households across nine communities are currently involved in the project. In each village, there are now VDMCs with three sub-committees. Their roles are presented below.

Water and sanitation committee

- Ensure availability and access to clean water by mobilisation of the necessary resources.
- Ensure that sanitation needs of women are taken care of (especially pregnant, lactating, and menstruating women).
- Spray bleaching powder and other disinfectants in the village to prevent the spread of infectious disease.
- Ensure that trenches and lavatories are cleaned and disinfected.
- Ensure the proper use of the sanitation facilities by the community.

A community map (left), transect walk (right). Photo: arche noVa

- Check the water quality using the water testing kit and purification through chlorination.
- Inform the community about purifying water before drinking, to prevent diseases and infections.
- Carry out the task of preventing water congestion / water clogging.

Damage and loss assessment committee

- Help in assessing damages to infrastructures like roads, water supply, markets and distribution networks.
- Approach and solicit the local authorities' support to assess the damage and loss incurred.
- Help affected and vulnerable families with immediate response during the disaster.

Reconstruction and rehabilitation committee

- Ensure the community's access to reconstruction materials.
- Approach authorities and NGOs and solicit support for rebuilding damaged public infrastructure and follow up until rebuilding is completed.
- Liaising with the affected community and government and creating awareness about the initiatives being undertaken in responding to the disaster.

The lessons

Develop tailor-made solutions

Every country and locality is unique and affected differently by various challenges. A key lesson we have learnt is that solutions for one reality cannot be used in another jurisdiction. The need for tailor-made solutions and formation of ad hoc partnerships between humanitarian organisations, governments and local authorities is crucial. The relevant stakeholders can enable transfer of knowledge, best practices and lessons learnt that can help to identify effective and sustainable solutions.

Supporting & involving local government

Support and involvement of local government and community is key, especially in the event of challenges. During the construction of the first sand dam in Gedo Region, the Al-Shabab militia planted grenades on the structure, thinking it was a bridge. Luckily, the intervention of the community and local leaders explaining to Al-Shabab the importance of the water harvesting infrastructure, solved the situation. The construction was completed, and water is now available for everybody.

The community is the main actor

Too often, vulnerable communities are viewed as victims and helpless beneficiaries without viable resources to contribute to the needs in their community. Our CMDRR approach adopts a reverse attitude based on the higher and clearer understanding by the target communities of the fragile complexities of their problems and thus considering them agents of their own development.

To avoid such instances, our experience has shown that when conducting DRR initiatives, the humanitarian actors are there mainly for facilitation and guidance purposes.

CMDRR as a tool for social transformation

Two effects of the CMDRR approach exist: on one side, it ensures impact and sustainability through systemic and sustainable transformation in the communities. On the other side, it enables a mindset shift towards social transformation in communities.

D Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB)

The shapes of adaptation

How digging half-moons helps cope with drought

The bird's eye view shows the staggered positioning of the half-moons. This helps to trap water-runoff and facilitates plant growth. Photo: ASB

In drought-affected parts of Niger, German NGO Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB) led an initiative to re-green barren land. This effort enabled recouped fodder production and raised the coping capacity of livestock breeders.

By Moussa Harouna Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund

Half-moons are compacted earth structures that open perpendicular to the direction of gravity water flow. Planted in staggered arrangements, half-moons can be used to recover degraded, bare and crusted land for agricultural, pastoral or forestry purposes.

The technique helps livestock breeders to produce sufficient fodder and is widely used to adapt to climate change. In Niger, we have used the technique to strengthen the resilience of livestock breeders through cash for work efforts.

The context

With 32 million heads of all species, Niger has more livestock than people and is unquestionably a breeding country. Recurring droughts across much of the land-locked country pose a major risk for livestock. During years of drought, breeders experience substantial


Digging in the dirt…

fodder deficits. Consequences are severe: many animals lose weight and starve to death; miscarriages are common. With not enough fodder for all their animals, breeders are forced to de-stock and, in many cases, seek alternative livelihoods. Many move to neighbouring Algeria and Libya in search for work.

The region of Tahouna, and particularly its department of Tilia (about 400 km east of the capital Niamey), is regularly affected by this slow-onset disaster of drought and associated fodder shortages.

Challenges

The main challenges are to prevent harmful effects of drought to livestock breeders and to strengthen their resilience. Ensuring sufficient fodder allows farmers to maintain or recover their livestock and to access food and health care. This also eases the pressure among breeders to migrate to other countries.

Key activities

The activities that we carried out as part of the GFFO-funded AA2 project aimed for significant poverty alleviation and risk reduction. The specific technique of establishing pastoral half-moons included the following steps:

- Identification of vulnerable villages;
- Assessment of the availability of degraded land in these vulnerable villages;
- Selecting women and men who were able and willing to carry out the work;
- Purchasing land reclamation equipment;
- Training participants on the pastoral half-moon approach;
- Distributing materials to participants;
- Starting up and supervising the work; and
- Paying workers based on the number of hollow half-moons they created each month.

Results

- In just two years, the use of pastoral half-moons led to the regeneration of 1,175 hectares of degraded land in 1,750 hectares of green space — the equivalent of 1,679 soccer fields.
- The funds injected allowed 2,500 households to have access to food and rebuild the livestock decimated by previous droughts.
- It offered work to the able-bodied arms of the intervention villages and helped reduce the phenomenon of youth exodus.

Lessons learnt

Transforming degraded land into green space has its own rules and principles that must be followed if we want to succeed in this activity. Here are our 9 tips:

- Recovery sites must be identified and selected in collaboration with local authorities.
- All materials need to be purchased on time.
- Adequate training of participants on half-moon techniques is a necessity.
- Employment of children under the age of 18 years on the sites must be prohibited.
- Having a nanny to watch over women's children encourages women's participation.
- Having an emergency kit on each site is essential.
- Paying workers on time is a factor of success
- Seeding and planting of sites during rainy sessions is an important aspect of the project.
- Newly recovered sites should be monitored to ensure that water flow and plant growth is as needed.


…to green the desert.

E Sudan Red Crescent

Funding local adaptation action

An approach in Sudan aims for sustainable enablers

To enable locally designed initiatives, Sudanese Red Crescent Society (SRCS) established Community Disaster Resilience Funds (CDRF). The approach uses competition and clear criteria to allocate funds. Means for sustainability are part and parcel.

By Sarah Abdelrahman Sudanese Red Crescent

Sudan experiences many natural and human-induced hazards that include floods, drought, land degradation, soil erosion, deforestation, and water scarcity. Environmental threats in Sudan have an impact on poverty, food security, long-term economic growth and the peace process. Chronic drought and flash floods are the two major climate risks facing Sudan, with reduced rainfall and increased rainfall variability being a particular issue in the northern parts (Northern State, North Kordofan State, North Darfur State, Red Sea State) during only three month of the year (June to September).

Challenges

Drought: Sudan has suffered several long and devastating droughts in the past decades. All regions

CDRF-supported rehabilitation of terraces in Sudan's Northern State. Photo: SRCS

have been affected, but the states most affected are Northern Kordofan, Northern, North and West Darfur, as well as Red Sea and White Nile. In drought-affected areas, there is clear evidence of declining forest cover, soil erosion and desertification. While 63% of the land in Sudan is vulnerable to drought and desertification, 82% of the population live in productive lands that are vulnerable to drought and desertification.

Floods: Annual regeneration of the floodplain is important for agriculture while on the other hand periodically flooding is excessive and leads to both human and economic losses.

There is evidence that while deaths from disasters generally have decreased in recent decades, deaths from floods have increased. Floods can have severe consequences and cause economic and social damage as well as damages to infrastructure and cultural sites of archaeological value.

Sudan is characterised by high variability in river flows, making it conducive to extremes that lead to flood and drought events.

Key activities

Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) and Swedish Red Cross (SRC) are supporting Sudanese Red Crescent Society (SRCS) through the development of a project in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) that aims to strengthen the capacities of community resilience through the reduction of disaster risks and adaptation to climate change. This project targets the most two vulnerable states of Sudan (Northern State and North Kordofan State) as well as River Nile State.

In order to strengthen the capacity of the target communities to plan measures and manage the disasters, the Community Disaster Resilience Fund (CDRF) has been an essential part of the project's activities.

The Community Disaster Resilience Fund (CDRF) is an innovative and flexible finance mechanism to channel resources directly to community groups living in poor and risk-prone communities. The CDRF has been conceived to direct funds straight to local at-risk communities to support them in initiating and scaling up effective disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation practices.

To sustain community level disaster reduction activities, the development of a continuous source of funds is very important. This will enable community members and community-based organisations (CBOs) to implement disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation activities that had been identified in the development of community action plan. This indeed helps develop the ownership sense in the community towards the DRR activities they undertake.

The CDRF is designed to support grassroots groups who are exposed to a wide range of natural hazards, as well as political and economic instability. The aim of CDRF is to deliver effective pro-poor disaster risk reduction and resilience strengthening practices and to collaborate with local and national governments to scale-up grassroots-led development initiatives.

The fund is also expected to demonstrate the benefits of enabling community groups to plan, design, implement and appraise resilience initiatives to governments and donors.

The CDRF-supported women's committee in North Kordofan supporting a Red Crescent health campaign. Photo: SRCS

The CDRF framework

Once established, the CDRF is an instrument that is expected to attract local contributions and to leverage resources from government programmes on poverty alleviation, development and infrastructure.

The goal of adopting CDRF in this project is to promote community leadership in strengthening capabilities and resource mobilisation.

Rationale of CDRF:

1. To sustain existing community-based disaster reduction and climate change adaptation activities;
2. To strengthen the resilience of the most vulnerable social groups;
3. To raise a strong sense of ownership of DRR and CCA activities; and
4. To organise immediate relief, rescue and recovery activities so that lives and property can be protected without waiting for external aid.

In each of the three states, the project targets two communities. SRCS was the facilitating organisation for implementing the process. Through the DRR project, the proposed CDRF activity started by allocating a seed fund and incentive for communities to act immediately to address the needs that reduce vulnerability and disaster risk while strengthening community resilience.

In each state, a CDRF committee was formed that comprised the following members:

1. Branch director (chair)
2. DRR/CCA project coordinator (member secretary)
3. DM head of the branch (member)
4. Local government representative (member)
5. CBO representatives (members)
6. Branch finance officer (member)

The CBO's representatives can be from any community groups that are able and willing to make nominal monthly contributions to the fund. This makes them eligible to access the CDRF and apply for disbursements. The requirement is considered an important strategy to sustain the CDRF.

The local authorities offered to help the committees to prepare policies and procedures for the management of the CDRF. This included policies on membership of the CDRF committee, contributions to the fund, the disbursement of micro-credits in pre and post disaster situations, repayment, and write-off. Procedures were put into place to manage, distribute and monitor the funds - thereby ensuring transparency, efficiency and accountability.

Subsequently, the CDRF pilot events took place in the six communities. These started with an introduction to the CDRF approach and a presentation as to how the tool could lower vulnerability to climate and disaster threats.

Initial activities furthermore included risk mapping, capacity strengthening (especially in terms of financial management), and clear guidance on how to utilise the CDRF effectively (including the demonstration of practices that are eligible to be funded by CDRF).

These practices are:

- distribution of resilient and improved seeds,
- organic farming,

- organic livestock production (cattle, goats, chicken)
- composting,
- innovative gardening,
- nursery development,
- water management,
- organic traditional crafting,
- early warning systems,
- disaster preparedness/ resilience practices.

Women's groups were strongly encouraged to apply, as women are major stakeholders in resilience-building exercises, especially due to their capacity as community leaders.

Successful groups that were awarded a fund had to return it within a period of time decided by the committee. Each group was committed to paying a percentage of the profit to the CDRF annually.

SRCS organised a series of consultations with community groups who applied for the CDRF. The applications were assessed on the basis of their proposed practices, the hazard risk profile, their willingness to participate in CDRF, and their expressed commitment to propose ideas for action. The committee then short-listed potential community groups and completed the final selection process.

In **Northern State**, the CDRF was implemented in the community of Argy. In The fund has been allocated to the WASH community committee, whose project was the establishment of a plant nursery. The committee returned the fund in twelve months and pledged to pay 5% of the nursery profit to the CDRF each year. Northern State is now undertaking a second phase of the CDRF. The nursery has direct beneficiaries of around 800 households and helps to enhance food security during the drought season.

In **North Kordofan**, the winning group was the women's committee in the community of Aradeaba. Their project aimed to distribute resilient and improved seeds as well as goats to improve the livelihood of the vulnerable families. Some 20 families received goats another 20 received seeds. They returned seeds and the offspring of goats in kind, which have since been distributed to other vulnerable families. As of late 2020, a total of 60 families have benefitted from this activity thus far.

Success stories: In Northern State, the community suggested to use the returns from the plant nursery project to rehabilitate the existing tresses and to thereby protect the community during the latest floods in September. Such preparedness actions increased the coping capacity of the community during that difficult season.

In North Kordofan, the women who received the goats as part of the fund bought cleaning tools to support the health environmental campaign pursued by SRCS.

Lessons learnt

Implementing the CDRF in Northern and North Kordofan States was very successful due to many factors, such as the ultimate support of the local government in Northern State. Here, the forestry authority provided the WASH committee with some plants and conducted a training, explaining how to manage and supervise the nursery.

In River Nile State, CDRF was not as successful as other states. Here, there was a lack of interest and commitment address disaster risk and climate changes; no CDRF funds have been disbursed so far.

Moreover, it was observed that the fact that positions on the CDRF committee are voluntary roles appears to decelerate the selection process.

Additionally, some of the community groups found it unacceptable and refused to pay a monthly amount of money in return for their eligibility to the fund.

For more information on the CDRF framework, which was first applied in India around 2009, see the operational guidelines here.

F Uganda Red Cross

We adapt!

How children and young adults became agents of change

Efforts to engage young adults and boys and girls in adaptation to climate change reached new heights in Uganda, where URCS became Africa's first Red Cross/Red Crescent Society to roll out the Y-Adapt programme.

By Blaise Bukuyi | Uganda Red Cross Society

Youths both in and out of school make up more than half of Uganda's population. If well engaged, educated and inspired, they can create meaningful change and help solve the current climate crisis.

URCS youth programming has adopted the Y-Adapt approach in its DRR implementation. This approach is based on game-based and experiential learning and seeks to support and inspire youth-led action on climate change adaptation at the community level.

The curriculum has three stages: a) a **learning** stage (training), b) an **action** stage (implementation), and c) a **sharing** stage (documentation and sharing adaptation cards globally). The programme uses participatory methods, so the content is contextualised and shaped by the youths' experiences and opinions, meaning that it can effectively work across very different contexts.

It helps young men and women and boys and girls to understand climate change and to take practical action to adapt to the changing climate in their community.

These actions are local interventions that reduce the impacts of extreme weather events. The curriculum comprises six sessions that feature an introduction to Y-Adapt, a session comparing weather and climate, critical thinking challenges to map out extreme weather impacts, a systematic brain-storming session to identify

important resources and prioritise resources in specific communities, sand the creation of and action plans for climate change adaptation.

A lot of actions related to DRR and nature-based solutions have already been achieved across the continent, for instance DRR Wash, Water Borne Diseases Advocacy, Food Security and Nutrition with innovative solutions that involve promotion of energy saving technologies like the use of charcoal briquettes and wonder bags.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic however, this curriculum was almost impossible to implement. Restrictions of movement and community engagement included limitations to gatherings, school shut-downs, and total lockdowns in most places. However, efforts are underway for an online roll-out of the programme. These are based on video recording and animations to assist in the scaling up of the approach.

The context

Globally, the youth account for over 65% percent of the total population living in urban, peri-urban and rural settings. How far and how often are they engaged in climate adaptation?

Y-Adapt was designed under the Partners for Resilience (PfR) initiative, using a participatory play-testing method. The design process involved hundreds of youth in urban and rural contexts across Indonesia and the Philippines over a two-year period from 2015 to 2017.

The Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre partnered with the Philippine Red Cross Society, Plan International and Plan Philippines, and Engagement Lab at Boston University to design and test the curriculum, until we were confident that all the games and activities worked effectively to inspire youth.

National Societies like German Red Cross have supported URCS in youth programming through the youth exchange program. In February 2019, URCS became the first African National Society to roll out the Y-Adapt climate-adaptation curriculum.

Y-Adapt is an interactive, games-based curriculum. Seven sessions build on each other to explore key concepts of climate change, extreme weather, hazards and vulnerabilities relevant to participants' communities, developing awareness of integrated approaches to promote risk management.

Drawing from the 'Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment' (VCA) toolkit, Y-Adapt incorporates tools such as the seasonal calendar to show change over time. Experiential learning and dialogues strengthen understanding and engage youth in developing and implementing their own community action plans to reduce climate-related risks, to adapt to them, and to become more climate-resilient. The programme's phases are learning, action and sharing:

Y-Adapt's three phases

Learning phase	Action phase	Sharing phase
Weeks 1-3 • 6 interactive sessions (1h each) • 2 sessions/week • Topics: climate change, extreme weather, hazards • Youth develop and action plan	**Weeks 4-9** • Youth implement their action plans in their communities • They keep a weekly photo diary to track and document progress	**Week 10 onwards** • Youth capture their actions on adaptation cards • These cards and photo diaries are shared online to inspire more youth-led action around the world

This programme was rolled out in urban and rural schools across Uganda, with over ten URCS branches taking part. It was initially rolled out in central Uganda, including Uganda's capital of Kampala, and then expanded to URCS branches in some of the districts in Western Uganda (Kisoro, Kabale, Kasese, Mbarara) and Eastern Uganda (Katakwi, Mbale, Bubulo, Sironko and Kapchorwa).

The challenges

Climate change is happening now. Impacts are projected to get worse in the future. Children and youths can be important agents of change in raising awareness and taking action. About five years ago, we recognised that although there were materials to educate youth on climate change, these were not really inspiring and supporting youth-led actions through critical thinking and solution finding on climate change adaptation in their communities. And so Y-Adapt was designed to address this gap.

Why Y-Adapt?

Climate change impacts projected to become increasingly severe in the future

Children and youth can be important agents of change

Materials are needed that support critical thinking and solution finding, and that inspire action.

Games-based curriculum to inspire 13-25 year olds to develop and implement their own CCA action and advocacy plans

Integrated risk management

The actions

The following steps were taken and also serve as general guidance for rolling out a Y-Adapt programme:

1. **Ensure** understanding of Y-Adapt's potential and relevancy to your community/country or organisation.
2. **Form** an in-country steering committee to handle and push forward the approach-
3. **Establish** partnerships - make agreements for long-term sustainability of the approach and identify mutual benefits of the programme to the partners.
4. **Integrate** the Y-Adapt programme into strategic planning for the next five years or more.
5. **Conduct** the first training of trainers to build capacity of your organisation and test roll-out in a pilot area. We applied this in one of the urban secondary schools with students aged 13-15 years.
6. **Expand** programme to other schools. We expanded Y-Adapt to reach in-school and out-of-school youths through the Uganda Red Cross branches across the country.
7. **Record** Y-Adapt videos to enable sharing. We created a set of Y-adapt videos to support online training of new facilitators and refresher trainings of current facilitators.

Next steps and developments

At URCS, we are now in the process of scaling up and improving the Y-Adapt programme. Here's what is coming up:

1. **Y-Adapt instructional videos** for online trainings for fresh facilitators and refresher trainings are being developed.
2. **Specialist sessions** are being developed on experiencing and assessing the environment.
3. **Future topics** will include urban youth-led actions on integrated Risk management in the urban context, and on health, gender and advocacy.
4. **Development** of Children's climate cards for children aged between 8 and 12 years, especially those schooled at home.
5. **Establishment** of a regional network among National Societies to promoted the sharing of knowledge and experiences.

The lessons

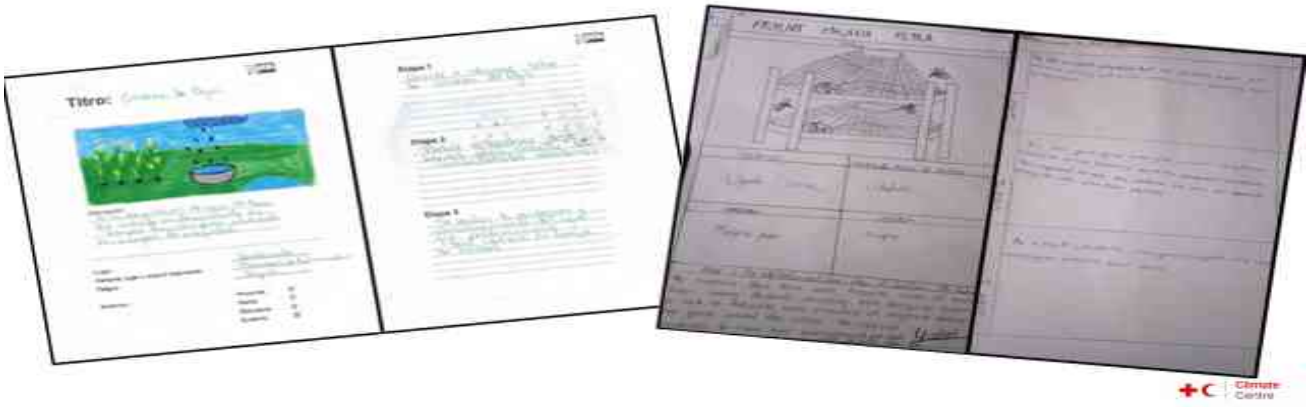
1. **Covid-19**: Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the associated restrictions, it was quite difficult to conduct trainings throughout most of 2020, since they involve physical games. However, the process of development of instructional videos has already started.
2. **Sustainability**: The Y-Adapt programme is by a steering committee of young people who are energetic, passionate and self-driven with a zeal to develop more innovative solutions. It represents a sustainable approach: most of the small-scale actions that the youth implemented have turned into the bankable ideas at the branch level. However, an the programme could be even more sustainable if youth involvement became embedded in the URCS Strategic Plan, thereby enabling long-term funding.
3. **Time pressures:** when implementing the Y-Adapt programme in schools, only a few days can be allocated to the curriculum as students have other school commitments. This forces the facilitators to rush through so as to cover the entire curriculum.
4. **Long-term funding of actions**: There are limited opportunities for sustainably funding young people's innovative and bankable solutions to the climate

crisis. Most available funding is for the short term only, and are part of bigger projects that do no include specific budget lines for youth engagement.

5. **Expansion:** Until 2019, when Uganda became the first African country to pioneer Y-Adapt as a tool to engage young people in climate change adaptation, there was no youth-friendly way of teaching young people about the climate crisis. The programme needs to be scaled up to reach the most vulnerable young people in other places.
6. **Young pioneers:** Young people and communities should lead by localising actions and shifting the focus from online awareness to real-world action.
7. **Information technology:** We must use the power of technology to educate and challenge our own selves, share good peer practices, and embrace our innovative minds, set pace and keep momentum. There is no other planet to escape to.
8. **Further youth engagement:** Uganda is in the process of enacting climate-smart legislation - namely, the bills on climate change, wetlands conservation, as well as disaster preparedness and management. Young people are part of this discussion and we hope there will be an enabling environment for us to engage directly in the implementation.

See more information on Y-Adapt here:
https://www.weadapt.org/knowledge-base/y-adapt

Examples of adaptation cards



Examples of youth-led actions

Examples of youth-led initiatives include Malaria prevention, backyard /sack gardening, making of charcoal briquettes, promotion of wonder bags, and Covid-19 community engagement by and for youths on social media.

AFRICA REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON
DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Reducing risk, **raising** resilience

Risk reduction in practice: six stories of successful risk reduction during the Covid-19 pandemic

Workshop report: Africa Regional Workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction, December 2020

Tippy-taps, half-moons, flood-resistant huts, and much more: during the Africa Regional Workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction, participants showcased great innovations to reduce risk and raise resilience of communities across the continent.

This report features the six top case studies that were selected by participants. They are geared to inspire other DRR practitioners and to help address the growing pressures generated by climate change that are now felt by communities across the continent.

The impact of Covid-19 on programming was a key feature in discussions. And while the restrictions that were put in place challenged DRR programming, several solutions emerged that showed how quickly humanitarian agencies were able to adapt to the new normal.

german humanitarian assistance
DEUTSCHE HUMANITÄRE HILFE

German Red Cross