



DRR IN Uganda

Uganda has experienced a wide range of disasters directly affecting most of the country. They suffer frequent drought, earthquakes, disease epidemics, livestock and crop disease, flooding, landslides and civil conflict. A total of about 4.1 million people in Uganda have been affected by climate related disasters since 1979, of which 3.2 million have suffered severe droughts, 0.9 million affected by floods and 0.1 million by water borne diseases and Malaria epidemics. The majority of those affected in all these disasters are children. Disasters usually result in children facing heightened risks, including

family separation, psychological distress, physical harm and gender-based violence. While Uganda has made significant steps in economic and social development since the devastation of civil war in the 1970s and 1980s, they still face major challenges. Ugandan communities, families and children struggle to access healthcare, education and other basic services. While the country has won praise for its fight against HIV/AIDS, the epidemic has nonetheless been devastating – Uganda has the highest proportion of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS worldwide.

Save the Children's Presence in Uganda

Save the Children in Uganda has focused on health, protection, HIV/AIDS, education and food security/hunger prevention for children and their communities. In Uganda, Karamoja region has had an unfair proportion of hazards that have led to disasters time after time. The population in this region have lost most of its livelihood coping strategies/mechanisms that previously helped in preparedness, mitigation, resilience and meaningful recovery from the disasters. The very clear evidence of these is the growing numbers of Karimojong children begging on the streets of major towns in Uganda. In response to this, over the past 2 years in Uganda Save the Children has implemented 2 DRR programs with support from Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and ECHO.

Building Resilience

Save the Children implemented a disaster risk reduction project to prepare and mitigate the effects of disasters, providing early warning information to the community in the parishes of Lokupoi, Nadunget, Nawekorot, and Kakingol in the sub-counties of Matany, Nadunget, Ngoleriet, and Katikekile respectively with a specific focus on fulfilling children's rights. One of the major objectives of the project was to bring cereals at an affordable price to communities that occasionally experience severe food shortages, through the establishment of 16 cereal banking groups. Each group has 25 members with families averaging 9 members. The members of the households are eligible to share the profits from the sales of the cereals. This was achieved to a large extent as the cereals banks had enough tons of cereals to supply the catchment areas at affordable prices. The availability of cereals provided time for most of the household members to work regularly in their gardens. The cereal banks are situated strategically so that they can be accessed by most community members in the sub counties where the project is being implemented. Therefore, 95% of the populations in these sub counties were able to benefit from the availability of affordable grains in their communities during times of scarcity.

DRR & Health

The program 'Drought risk reduction for the improvement of children's nutrition in Karamoja in north eastern Uganda' was implemented in partnership with the Feinstein International Centre (FIC) of Tufts University on a Milk Matters initiative to understand the importance of milk in the diets of young children in arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL). Research in the broader Horn of Africa finds that pastoralists draw clear linkages between lack of access to milk and the signs of malnutrition in their children, and communities in these study populations point to livestock health as the most critical avenue to improve availability and access to milk. Therefore, this project will implement community disaster risk management plans and pilot innovations from "Milk Matters" study to increase milk availability through pastoral field schools. It will promote good health and nutrition practices related to milk utilisation, especially in times of drought and stages prior to drought. Community Disaster Risk Reduction Management (CDRRM) committees will be established at the village level to develop Community Disaster Management Plans (CDMP's) in sub-counties. EWS feedback mechanisms will be established/developed and IEC/BCC materials on hygiene and nutrition issues will be disseminated alongside various training groups.

Capacity Building

Save the children has enhanced the team in Uganda's programming capacity and efficiency for disaster management through building staff capacity. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) concepts were introduced over a three-day workshop using tools and concepts from the Africa DRR workshop. Links were created between child rights programming and DRR and CCA and a platform for the integration of DRR and CCA across thematic areas was established. The workshop aimed to provide Save the Children staff with a strong understanding of DRR and CCA in order to build their capacity to work with partners and local government on larger DRR and CCA initiatives in the future.

Cover: Young students work on their writing skills in a preschool classroom in conflict-stricken Karamoja.

