HANDLING DISASTER RESILIENCE AMONG NORTHERN KENYA COMMUNITIES

Climate Change in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa

✓ KEY POINT IN CONSIDERATION

Empowering communities to take their own initiative to reduce risks of drought

Due to the effect of climate change, traditional lifestyle of local people in Northern Kenya is threatened.

Traditional welcome dance of the Rendille tribe performed in the project site.

Generally, the northern part of Kenya has four seasons: short rainy, long rainy, short dry and long dry. In a normal year, the long dry season lasts for about six months and for pastoralists, it is not drought as long as it rains at the end of the season. However, if it does not rain in the following short rainy season, the dry period may extend up to 11 months (so-called single-year drought). If the dry season lasts for more than two rainy seasons, it is considered as multiyear drought, and the livelihood condition of residents becomes severe. Since rainfall is unpredictable, local people cannot forecast how many months or years a drought may last. And when they realise that a severe drought has arrived, it is already too late to prepare for it.



Aiming to strengthen resilience against drought of local pastoralists, semi-settled and settled people, the Government of Kenya implemented "The Project for Enhancing Community Resilience against Drought in Northern Kenya" or ECoRAD Project from 2012 to 2015 with the support from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Project Details

Typical cause of livestock death during drought in Northern Kenya

The target area of ECoRAd comprised of Marsabit and Turkana Counties in Northern Kenya. These two counties have similar rainfall patterns with short/long rainy seasons and short/long dry seasons. During rainy reason, herders tend to keep livestock near their village. When the rainy season is over and the dry season comes, they start to move to the dry season grazing area where pastures and water are available. If pasture or water is exhausted in the first grazing area, they move to the next grazing area. When the dry season is over, herders take back the livestock to their home village, and they stay there for the whole rainy season.

Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) Approach

The ECoRAD Project adopted Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) Approach, a process in which a community is actively engaged in identifying, analysing and evaluating disaster risks with the aim of reducing people's vulnerability and enhancing their capacities.

In a CMDRR process, communities are facilitated and assisted to carry out disaster risk assessment, draw a disaster risk reduction strategy, and prepare a Disaster Risk Reduction Community Action Plan.



In addition, as subprojects under the three major components, various small projects were implemented such as borehole/water pan construction, sand dam rehabilitation, construction and upgrading of livestock markets, goat merry-go-round project and honey business projects.

