**REPORT:**

**IMPROVING DISASTER RESILIENCE IN KALENJIN COMMUNITY**

***Meaning of resilience***

Resilience is the ability to cope with unexpected changes and challenges in your life. It’s not always possible to prevent stressful or adverse situations, but you can strengthen your capacity to deal with these challenges.

Resilience is your ability to cope with tough times by applying your inner strength and engaging support networks. Resilience can enable you to face difficult situations and maintain good mental health.

Resilience is about anticipating, planning and reducing disaster risk to effectively protect persons, communities and countries, their livelihoods, health, cultural heritage, socio-economic assets and ecosystems. The ideas of ‘bounce back’, ‘spring forward’ and ‘build back better’ are often used in the context of resilience.

Resilience is related to capacity and coping capacity and often understood as follows:

* Resilience: the ability to flourish in the face of disaster risk
* Capacity: strengths and resources available to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from disasters
* Coping capacity: the ability to face and manage disasters

. For many specialists, resilience is believed to be the opposite of vulnerability and, likewise, similar to capacity, while others view capacities more as attributes of individuals and households and resilience as the coming together of capacities with the social, institutional and informational services that enable their effective use. Resilience also emphasizes the importance of not only effectively managing change but also improving well-being in the face of multiple risks and shocks.

The emphasis on resilience has emerged from the need to identify principles and measures to protect development gains from shocks and stresses. Owing to this need, resilience is an agenda shared by those concerned with disaster, financial, political, conflict and climate threats to development. The aim of resilience programming is, therefore, to ensure that shocks and stresses do not lead to a long-term downturn in development progress.

Similar to vulnerability, resilience can be discussed in terms of types; for instance economic, social, health, cultural and environmental resilience, which helps us to understand the different components of resilience. In the case of economic resilience, for example, a country’s resilience depends, to an important extent, on whether a government is able to absorb financial losses. However, enhancing resilience requires implementing strategies that account for all the types of resilience so as not to enhance one component at the expense of another

***Measurement of resilience***

By measuring trends or patterns in resilience, we can try to determine whether the measures for enhancing resilience have worked.

There have been a number of approaches, tools and methods applied to measuring resilience, focusing on assessing elements such as:

* Technological capacity
* Skills and education levels
* Economic status and growth prospects
* Quality of environment and natural resource management institutions
* Livelihood assets
* Political structures and processes
* Infrastructure
* Flows of knowledge and information
* Speed and breadth of innovation

Like any assessment, it is necessary to constrain the geographical and time-scale of the analysis.

A way of implementing and measuring resilience is through disaster risk management, which has proven popular with development actors. However, more research is required to compare methods of measuring resilience and disaster risk management effectiveness

***How to build resilience***

Like vulnerability, resilience can be a difficult concept to understand, partly due to the differences of opinion between specialists as to what the concept refers to, as well as the challenge of turning this concept into practical measures.

Because risk and systems are dynamic, resilience should be thought of as a process rather than simply an outcome, involving learning, adaptation, anticipation and improvement in basic structures, actors and functions.

Resilience building needs to consider the fact that several shocks and stresses may occur together. Characteristics of a resilient system include:

* **High level of diversity** in terms of access to assets, inclusion in decision-making and the availability of economic opportunities
* **Level of connectivity** between institutions and organisations at different scales and the extent of information, knowledge, evaluation and learning sharing up, down and across these scales
* **Blended forms of knowledge** used to anticipate and manage change
* **Level of redundancy** allowing areas to fail without leading to the whole system collapse (similar to the concept of residual risk)
* **Equal and inclusive** balanced distribution of risks
* **Social cohesion and capital** allowing individuals to be supported within social structures

Therefore building resilience should include policies and practices that enhance each of these characteristics. One approach to resilience is to begin with effective risk management, since their strong similarities between risk and resilience as frameworks, which:

* Provide an holistic framework for assessing systems and their interaction, from the household and communities through to the sub-national and national level
* Emphasize capacities to manage hazards or disturbances
* Help to explore options for dealing with uncertainty, surprises and changes
* Focus on being proactive

On one hand, measures to reduce disaster risk strengthen resilience. On the other hand, many of the actions taken to improve resilience also reduce disaster risks. A resilient approach to DRR includes:

* **Improving cooperation and harmonization of programming** across sectors.
* **Investing in proactive, long-term projects** that anticipate shocks, reduce risks and improve capacities to manage change
* **Aligning DRR with other risk-based interventions** (i.e. conflict prevention or social protection, climate change adaptation, etc.)

Capacity building, disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management are all components of developing and enhancing resilience. Disaster risk management options must recognize resilience as a process that is inherently context specific.

Resilience needs to be enhanced at all levels, from the local to the international. It is about preventing the creation of risk, the reduction of existing risk and the strengthening of economic, social, health and environmental resilience through the adoption and implementation of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies and plans, across different timescales with targets, indicators and time frames. Five major requirements of being a disaster resilient society are the ability to:

* **Anticipate risk** : understand and assess risk
* **Prepare to adjust** : use tools to support decision-making in the face of the uncertainty of future risks (e.g. scientific models)
* **Share and learn** : improve people’s flexibility to deal with different challenges by making them better informed or experimenting with different approaches, enhancing understanding of risks and supporting flexibility
* **Integrate sectors** : promote greater dialogue and coordination across sectors and disciplines (e.g. climate change)
* **Include the most vulnerable**: manage risk across all levels, connect decision-making and consider the weakest part of the system. Small island developing states (SIDS) and low and middle-income countries continue to lack resilience to disaster risk.

## Strengthening resilience

## Resilience can be strengthen by:

* knowing your strengths and keeping them in mind
* building your [self-esteem](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/self-esteem) — have confidence in your abilities and the positive things in life
* build healthy relationships
* knowing when to ask for help
* [managing stress](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/stress) and [anxiety](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/anxiety) levels
* working on problem solving skills and coping strategies