

Food Security in the Horn of Africa (Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia)

2015/16



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

Facts and figures

Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia have a population of 133 million people with nearly 44% living in areas prone to food insecurity.

The IGAD region is the most food-insecure part of the world. 60-70% of its total surface is arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs), which experience prolonged drought and unpredictable rainfall patterns. Around 60% of the ASAL inhabitants are pastoralists depending on livestock as their livelihoods.

Climate change, growing populations, and declining per capita agricultural capacity are expected to further threaten food security.

(Source: Relief Web 03.02.2014)

Food Security focus for 2015/16

Further reducing food insecurity by strengthening longer term sustainable development approaches, while maintaining capacity to respond to emergency situations.

Scaling up of activities targeting improved access to water of livestock in arid lands.

Strengthened collaboration and dialogue with governments, IGAD, UN agencies and other key partners and setting up alliances.

Consolidation of SDC's position on pastoralism and resilience.

Key Partners

MWA, VSF, FAO, WFP, GIZ, IGAD, Government institutions in Kenya & Ethiopia.

Financial planning 2015/16

CHF 14 million



A pastoralist watering Shoats from a trough at Barkuke SSD site in Modogashe, Garissa county. ©SDC

Increasing food security and resilience of Arid and Semi-Arid Land (ASAL) communities is one of Switzerland's key priorities in the Horn of Africa (HoA), as set in its Cooperation Strategy for the Horn of Africa 2013-2016. Switzerland's interventions focus on supporting the adaptation and diversification of livelihood strategies to cope with environmental, socio-economic and political challenges in Somalia, South-Eastern Ethiopia and North/ North-Eastern Kenya.

Switzerland's Engagement

The recurrent food security crisis faced in the Horn of Africa (HoA) calls for preventive approaches and drought risk management at local, national and regional level, as well as building resilience through long-term systemic approaches to strengthen capacities for food production and income generation. Through its complementary use of instruments (humanitarian aid, development cooperation, policy dialogue) and diversity of partners (UN agencies, international and national NGOs, regional institutions and governmental institutions), Switzerland aims at contributing to:

- Increased adaptive capacities of dry land communities and government entities to cope with drought and other incidents that trigger food insecurity (including food assistance as coping mechanism in case of acute and chronic food insecurity).
- Improved access to needs-based services for livestock production, dry land agriculture and local value chain actors, with a focus on vulnerable women, men and children.
- Integrating good practices of natural resource management, including water and rangeland management, into local, national and regional policies and institutions.

Strategic Outlook (2015/16)

SDC is in the process of consolidating its policy vis-à-vis pastoralism and resilience in the region. Recognizing that pastoralism is not just an economic and social system but also a way of life and a culture, SDC strives to contribute to increased productivity of the sector along the whole value chain. This includes close collaboration and support of Government structures to provide the necessary political framework and guidelines as a basis for a sustainable pastoralist sector and to offer high quality advisory services to pastoralist communities. Special emphasis is put on strengthening Natural Resource Management (NRM). Other critical issues to be addressed to enhance sustainable livelihood of pastoralists are trans-boundary water resource management, increased access to markets for pastoralist products and interventions to reduce conflicts among pastoralist communities.

Context

Overall marginalization due to lack of infrastructure, weak governance, insecurity, frequent droughts and limited livelihood options keep major parts of the Horn of Africa in conditions of poverty and vulnerability. In the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL's) pastoralism based on an extensive, mobile livestock production system still serves as the foundation of people's livelihoods and culture. Communities face high levels of food insecurity due to the overuse of resources (overgrazing), population growth with increased pressure on resources, environmental degradation, increased prices for food and non-food items, limited mobility due to land fragmentation as a result of ownership rights in pastoral areas, conflicts, high climate variability, and severe droughts.

SDC's main interventions:

Moving towards sustainable and resilient livelihoods of pastoralist communities in Northern Kenya

The K-RAPID program is contributing towards the strengthening of public and private institutions in the water and livestock sectors, putting policy frameworks in place to ensure efficient county-wide and cross-border water and rangeland management systems, and to increase access to water and pasture. The program which started in August 2015 is multi-donor funded and implemented by the Millennium Water Alliance (MWA) in five arid counties in Northern Kenya (Isiolo, Turkana, Garissa, Marsabit, and Wajir). It will build on the gains made under the water for livestock (WfL) project that (ended in September 2014), which improved water access for livestock and domestic use.

Institutionalization of Agro-Pastoral Field Schools (APFS)

SDC in partnership with FAO has been instrumental in promoting the Farmer Field School (FFS) approach in Eastern Africa and SDC is recognized as the key donor in harmonization and policy mainstreaming of the approach that serves more than 10'000 groups in the region. The sustainability of the approach will be further enhanced by setting up a regional Field School knowledge hub that provides support to further integrate it into public and private extension service providers. Agro-Pastoral Field Schools (APFS) institutionalization, a two-year program, started in December 2015.

Drought resilience in Somalia

SDC supports two resilience programmes with FAO and a consortium of NGOs (SomReP), to reinforce coping mechanisms of households through enabling vulnerable families to anticipate, resist and recover quickly from external shocks. This includes: diversification of livelihoods, expanding agricultural production, rehabilitating irrigation canals and enhancing agricultural value chains through the restoration of marketing infrastructures. The

interventions also support the provision of temporary employment through implementing infrastructure rehabilitation work.

Drought resilience in South-East Ethiopia

SDC supports the drought resilience project in the lowlands of Ethiopia (Somali region) that aims at ensuring sustainable livelihoods and food security of drought affected pastoralist and agro-pastoral communities through natural resources focused interventions and support of income generation. The project managed by GIZ through delegated aid cooperation and implemented through government/public institutions and NGOs, promotes peace and sustainable development. Technical NRM insights are expected to feed into the Ethiopian Sustainable Land Management policies and standards.

IGAD-FAO Partnership Programme (PP) on Building Resilience for (Agro-) Pastoralist Communities

SDC supports IGAD and FAO to jointly contribute to build resilience of communities in the Horn of Africa's cross-border areas by addressing marketing and trade, transboundary animal diseases and natural resources management. The new partnership program (started January 2015) will also contribute to strengthen the capacity of IGAD specialized agencies to lead the regional agenda for the improvement of cross-border pastoral livelihoods. The five year partnership is designed to bring communities to the centre of the cross-border policy and investment discourse and actions; not only as beneficiaries but as key stakeholders defining their future.

Reducing vulnerability and food insecurity through watershed rehabilitation (Ethiopia)

SDC supports WFP's MERET programme, MERE, which aims at addressing root causes of vulnerability and chronic food insecurity by rehabilitating natural resources and enhancing land productivity. Main activities include physical and biological soil conservation, reforestation, small-scale irrigation, road construction and maintenance and income generating activities.

Further information

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