

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

COUNTRY'S POSITION PAPER ON RISK REDUCTION

Introduction

Over the years and in recent times Kenya has been exposed to a variety of disasters such as drought, floods, fires, and emerging disasters including HIV/ AIDS and terrorism among others. The Government of Kenya, in recognition of its responsibility to minimize the impact of disasters has fully embarked on disaster management practices that aim at risk reduction in a framework whose sole objective is sustainable development. It is in this context that there has been put in place administrative, legal, and remedial measures during, actual and apprehensive national danger or calamity.

This paper highlights the progress made towards risk and disaster reduction in the country, it also poses challenges and workable solutions modeled in Kenya

Component 1: Political Commitment and Institutional Aspects

1.1 National Policy, Strategy and Initiatives.

Kenya's efforts towards the formulation of a national policy on disaster management which began in early 1999 are now at an advanced stage. A draft national policy was created in June 2002 followed by a bill, which after being tabled in Parliament will provide the necessary legislation, strategies and the way forward regarding the management of disasters in the country. The overall aim of having a disaster policy and a bill is to establish by law a disaster management body/board where by there will be an institutional structure and institutional linkages with a formal system of disaster management and necessary support for operations especially preparedness. With a disaster policy in place, the country seeks to gain political consensus in disaster management and establish a focal point from where disaster issues will be addressed. The draft policy has therefore, adopted a multi-sectoral and multidimensional approach to disasters management where all relevant Government Ministries and Department, Agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations, Civil Society Organizations and International Partners are all incorporated.

The policy aims at harmonizing all stakeholders to make it more consistent and coherent and provides a basis for development of more pro-active and strategic initiatives. The overall goal of the policy is *to establish and maintain an efficient and effective and coordinated system for managing disasters, in order to minimize losses and resulting disruptions on the population, economy and environment.*

The draft policy recommends innovative strategic options including National Disaster Strategic Plans, Strategic Stockpiles of food items to add to the Strategic Grain Reserves, Disaster Trust Fund, District Contingency Fund and Insurance Initiatives. It further recommends the formation of an institutional framework including a National Disaster Management Authority in the Office of the President to provide the necessary leadership and coordination. The Authority will consist of a Board of Directors and a Secretariat, three departments of Finance, Administration, Planning and Research, Response and Recovery.

The policy initiative reflects the government's commitment towards formulating a coherent strategy in addressing disaster issues in a more proactive manner. The current initiative will be focused to strengthening the communities' capacities to better cope with disaster through District and Community based committees.

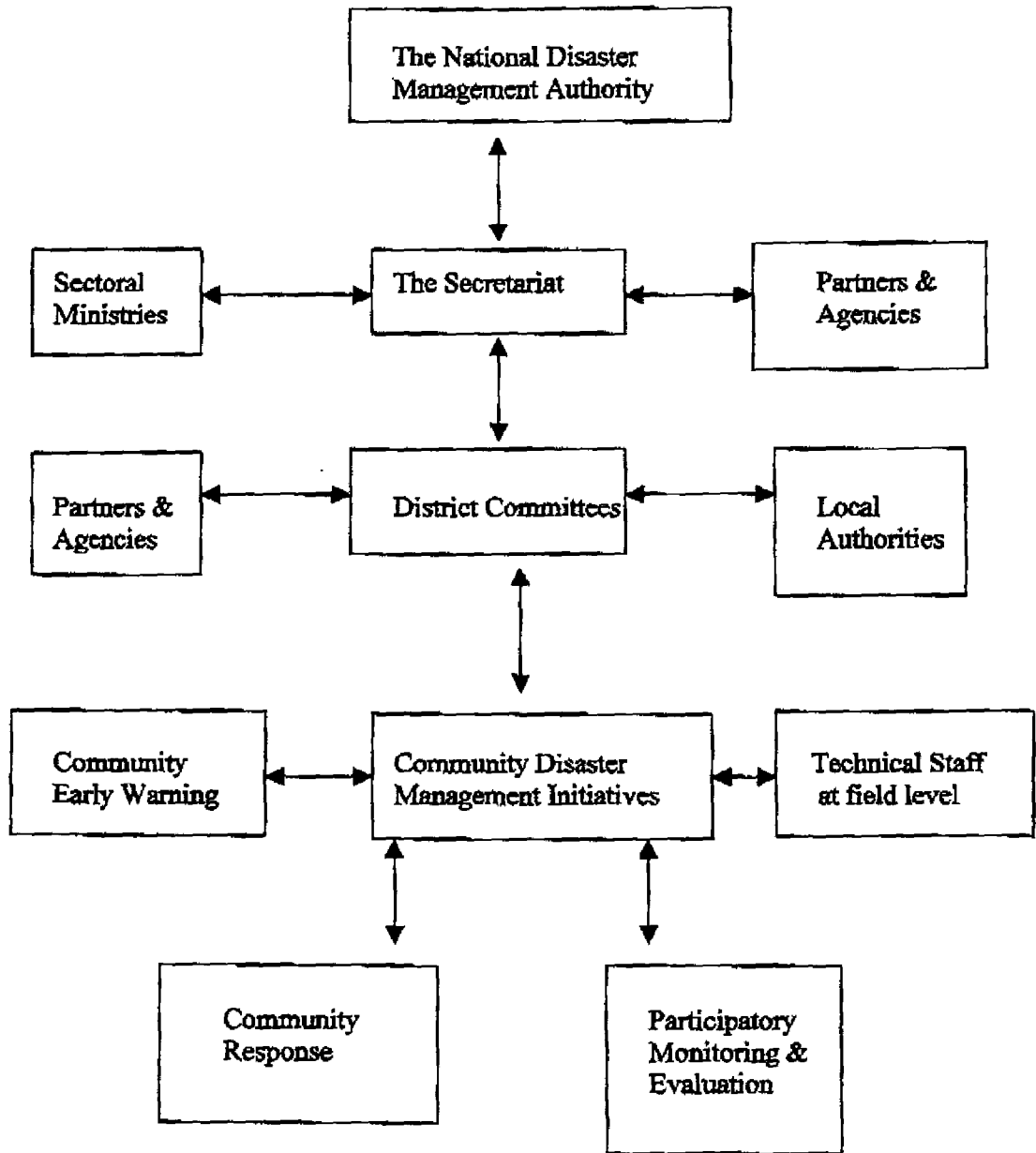
The national draft policy is also linked and recognizes other Acts of Parliament that empower government agencies and authorities to regulate the operations and activities of the public and private sector such as the national food policy 1994, HIV/AIDS Policy 1997 etc. It is also linked to legislation like the Environmental Management and Co-ordination Act No 8 of 1999, the Kenya Red Cross Society Act (Cap 256), the Water Act (Cap 372) (revised 2002), the Grass Fire Act among others.

1.2 National Body for Multisectoral co-ordination.

The draft policy recommends the formation a National Disaster Management Authority. This is expected to coordinate the activities of all agencies and partners involved during an emergency or disaster situation including coordination of relief efforts, recovery and restoration initiatives among other tasks. This national body will also be responsible for administration, financial management, and planning and research activities aimed at risk reduction. Line ministries and departments will be coordinated within the proposed national structure. (See figure 1 below).

Figure 1: The Organizational Structure of the Proposed National Disaster

Management Authority (NADIMA)



At present the Office of the President is coordinating a Capacity Building Exercise countrywide. The goal of the exercise is to build capacities of the District Disaster Management teams by first, reviving District Disaster Management Committees where they had become non-operational and forming committees where they have not been existing. Secondly, the exercise aims at drawing District Specific Disaster Management Strategic Plans which will finally be built-in into the District Development Plans with a view to harmonize disaster management with development. Thirdly the exercise aims at coming up with well-coordinated activities aimed at risk reduction where all stakeholders in the districts will be coordinated from one focal point – the district headquarters chaired by the District Commissioners.

Within the Kenya Food Security Structure, there is a close collaboration between the government and other institutions/organizations such as the Kenya Red Cross Society, Drought Monitoring Center, The Kenya Meteorological Department, AMREF, UN Agencies, among others, both in decision-making and response to disasters. There are indications that the collaboration needs to be expanded and common approaches adopted, including how to bring each actor on board despite their identities, structures, interests and policy differences.

Through trust, it has been demonstrated that different agencies can work together and can develop memoranda of understanding (MOU) to avoid duplication of efforts.

1.3 Sectoral Plans incorporating risk reduction concepts into each development area.

The draft policy recommends that the national disaster management authority will be funded by the parent ministry in the Office of the President. It will then in turn make its own sectoral Ministerial or Departmental Budgetary allocations focusing on the sectors' and ministries' initiatives towards disaster risk reduction. The authority will obtain alternative funds from the National Disaster Trust fund, which will draw contributions from the public and private sectors, international development partners, Non-Governmental and civil society organizations and the community at large.

At present there is a specific budget on Relief and rehabilitation and under the Arid Lands and Resource Management Project (ALRMP). The ALRMP addresses all the four stages of drought namely; Normal, Alert, Alarm and Emergency whereby the communities in arid lands are empowered to mitigate and respond effectively to droughts.

1.4 Incorporation of disaster risk reduction in the national plan for the implementation of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP)

The PRSP reflects the country's initiative towards risk reduction in the area of drought management which is the single most prevalent disaster in the country covering nearly half of the country and affecting a large part of the population especially in North Eastern, Eastern province, Central, Coast and parts of Rift Valley. The program's strategy, which is closely linked to the recently initiated medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF), was worked out in consultation with stakeholders from civil society Expenditure reallocations toward priority sectors is being defined, in close consultation with stakeholders (especially the poor), in the full PRSP. Public service reform and the envisaged reductions in the debt service burden are expected to provide room for additional resources to be allocated to poverty reduction programs over the medium term. All these and many more is done with full recognition of the role hazard play in making communities poor. Therefore, Kenya aims at linking its development plans closely with those plans aimed at reducing risks to hazards.

1.5 Building codes

In Kenya, building codes exist within the ministries of Public works, Roads and Housing and Local Government. The Local Authorities by-laws provide for the requirements of putting up buildings especially within the counties and the municipalities. The main challenge facing the sector is that the building codes have not been constantly updated and amended to deal with present day building standards. The By-laws with regard to building codes include:-

3 Mandatory regulations

These have to do with the construction and design measures that must be adhered to during construction and the owner of the building is liable to prosecution if he/she disregards this requirement.

This includes measures concerning: -

- Fire exits
- Outside staircase for tall buildings
- Installation of fire fighting equipment
- Use of fireproof materials in the construction process.

II. Obligatory regulations

Covers protection of individuals utilizing the premises. This puts an obligation on the authorities to protect the people through:-

- Awareness creation on fire safety and fire fighting
- Insurance protection against fire

III. Recommendatory regulations

These are user-specific in that they demand a self-evaluation in terms of recommendations relating to particular businesses. For example: -

People engaging in more risky businesses as in hotels and restaurants are required to strictly follow the recommendations. For example they should have extinguishers for different types of fires. They should also install other measures necessary for fire safety.

Maps also exist for possible earthquake risks in the country to guide development activities, especially settling of human beings.

1.6 Annual Budget for disaster risk reduction

The annual budget covers risk reduction in specific areas of extreme weather conditions especially drought and the management of HIV/AIDS, which was declared a national disaster in 1999.

1.7 Private Sector, Civil Society, NGOs, Academia and media participation

NGOs and the Civil Society Organizations play a major role in awareness creation, provision of relief supplies, recovery and rehabilitation of victims among other roles. The private sector is also making some headway in the management of specific hazards such as fire. The media has been very instrumental in publicizing the disasters and thus prompting awareness at the individual, groups and organizations levels. The academia play a tremendous role in research activities whose findings are further incorporated into policies at various levels of the country.

However it is sensible to note that the involvement of private sector in disaster management and risk reduction is one area that has been most dormant in Kenya. There is a challenge here to maximize on private sector goodwill, involvement including use of their structures, finances and expertise.

Component 2 : Risk Identification

2.1 Hazard Mapping

The country has carried out extensive hazard mapping for Drought and floods. This is done at the Drought Monitoring Center in Nairobi, in conjunction with the Kenya Meteorological Department. The two bodies have identified the key areas that are likely to experience harsh weather conditions such as drought and floods.

This information is available to all who may require it such as the academia, development partners and other stakeholders. Other institutions/organizations and line ministries are engaged in the exercise of zoning priority areas of their specific intervention as a way of identifying geographical areas where they should carry out their activities. It should be noted that at present the country has substantial facilities such as The Drought Monitoring Center (which is an IGAD project based in Nairobi), Regional Center for Mapping and The Kenya Meteorological Department among others, which can be used for, centralized mapping.

2.2 Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments

As stated above drought is the single most prevalent, most frequent disaster affecting a large part of the Kenyan population (five out of eight provinces). The vulnerability and capacity assessments are done in the affected areas and the information presented in form of maps, Charts and tables. A pilot Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (V.C.A.) on floods in the Western Region of Kenya has just been concluded. Out of the pilot study, it is expected that a multidisciplinary tool for a countrywide V.C.A. will be developed targeting all known hazards in the country.

The Drought monitoring center carries out capacity assessments for institutions on the ground, the people's knowledge and capacity to cope with the droughts and sets up measures to be undertaken in order to prevent loss of lives. This center works closely with the office of the President. The center also issues warnings in terms of when droughts and expected to occur, the areas that might be affected and how long the droughts are likely to take.

2.3 Mechanisms for risk monitoring and risk mapping

The mechanisms for risk monitoring and risk mapping are available for drought and floods monitoring mainly done at the Drought Monitoring Center and the Kenya Meteorological Department in conjunction with the office of the president. These institutions do the monitoring and mapping of adverse weather conditions mainly heavy rains and very scarce rains. Thereafter they report on the possibility of occurrence of heavy rains leading to floods and scarcity of the same leading to drought. They also assess the risk posed by these adverse weather conditions to lives, livelihoods, infrastructure and other property.

However, it should be noted that the country has plenty of information on various hazards that is scattered in various line ministries and department and is thus limited for purposes of quick dissemination.

2.4 Systematic socio-economic and environmental impact and loss analysis

Environmental impact analysis is carried out by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) which is the government organ mandated to identify, warn and if possible avert any disaster that may arise from manufacturing, mining and other activities that may impact on the environment. The authority is charged with assessing environmental loss and taking appropriate steps to reduce the same. It is also mandated to prosecute all people involved in environmental degradation that may lead to disastrous effects.

NEMA however requires strengthening and support in terms of finance, enforcement and coordination. The other challenge has to do with incorporating the communities into risk reduction initiatives and development of alternative socio-economic livelihoods with zero environmental degradation.

2.5 Early warning systems

Early warning systems have been established especially for harsh weather conditions like drought and flooding. The Kenya Meteorological department is charged with issuing warnings especially of impending droughts and floods which if taken seriously and measures put in place can avert a major calamity, reduce the impact and save lives. The Drought monitoring center plays a major role in issuing the early warnings for impending droughts. The ALRMP plays a big role in integrating the traditional Early Warning Systems with the modern ones.

Component 3: Knowledge Management

3.1 Disaster Risk Information management systems

Various organizations/institutions have generated and still are generating substantial amount of information on disaster risk management systems. However, it is noted with concern that the existing information has largely remained at the policy level and the bulk of the middle level management and almost the entire grassroots are not utilizing the existing information. The Media as a medium of information dissemination have been cited as contributing to this underutilization of the information.

There is a high concentration of the usage of mass avenues of communication such as radio, T.V. the print media, a bit of group media such as the public meetings and a total neglect of the individual avenues of communication such as the extension officers. On the other hand the usage of English and Kiswahili has left out the grass roots level consumers of information – specifically the illiterate.

3.2 Link between academic and research communities to national and local institutions dealing with disaster reduction.

The National Council of Science and Technology is mandated to link research communities to National and Local institutions in disaster management.

It is clear that the Council needs to be strengthened including providing of finances to the council so that it can be disbursed to researchers in disaster management.

3.3 Educational Programmes related to disaster risk reduction in public schools

Attempts have been made to incorporate elements of information on disaster, at the lower level primary school children are inculcated with a sense of preserving the environment, they are taught about the risks of environmental degradation and the importance of planting trees and grass to avoid soil erosion. At secondary school level the environmental education components are integrated into the syllabus and covered in a variety of subjects. At tertiary and university level the students take on the subjects of their interest and those who end up in subjects covering risk reduction end up as professionals in that field.

There is however more need for public education programs that target other aspects of disaster and management including, floods, fires, etc.

3.4 Training programmes

There are training programmes available countrywide on disaster risk reduction. Courses are offered at secondary level, college level, tertiary institutions, and the University level for undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate studies.

Apart from specific courses in specialized areas such as Architecture, Geology, Health sciences, the University of Nairobi offers an M.A. course in disaster management. Organizations such as The Kenya Red Cross Society offer courses in First Aid among others, AMREF offers short courses on disaster management and community nursing among others. These are generally offered to all interested students and persons working in government institutions and organizations that deal with risk reduction. All courses in various institutions are aimed at capacity building for all levels of management. The biggest challenge the country is faced with is that of harmonizing such training programs especially at primary, secondary and tertiary level in order to avoid duplication and improve on standards and quality.

3.5 Traditional Indigenous knowledge used in risk reduction

Kenya is a multilingual, multi ethnic nation, with a diverse cultural heritage. Kenya has been utilizing such ethnic diversity, in order to encourage and enhance symbiotic relationship and exchange of ideas and information between different communities. It is evident that communities have knowledge body on how to cope with disaster, how to mitigate and even a set-up for early warning systems.

Unfortunately all these have not been documented in a systematic way for use in risk reduction. There is therefore a challenge to document and disseminate such methodology for use by stakeholders in the disaster realm. Their experiences can then be

Unfortunately all these have not been documented in a systematic way for use in risk reduction. There is therefore a challenge to document and disseminate such methodology for use by stakeholders in the disaster realm. Their experiences can then be utilized in the development initiatives aimed at risk reduction and disaster management.

3.6 Public Awareness Programmes

The public awareness campaigns are done by the government in conjunction with the media, non-governmental organizations working in the area of risk reduction or simply raising an alarm about an issue and international organizations like the United Nations agencies, Action Aid, World vision etc.

There is however need for better-organized public awareness programs with common targets and approaches.

Component 4: Risk Management Applications or Instruments

4.1 Link between Environmental Management and Risk Reduction

In Kenya there is a clear link between environmental management and risk reduction as evidenced in the Environmental Management Coordination Act of 1999. The specific areas addressed in the act include, Wetland Management; Watershed Management; Reforestation management; Urban Land Use Management and Agricultural Practices. The by- laws in the above specific areas are backed up with financial instruments such as Insurance, The Calamity Fund and Micro - Credit Institutions which fund activities aimed at environmental management. However it is noted with great concern that enforcement of the Environmental Management Act of 1999 is wanting as there is rampant encroachment on wetland and watershed coupled with poor management; lack of serious reforestation programmes and poor agricultural practices. On the other hand it is noted that insurance coverage is very limited.

5. Priorities

In order to enhance and strengthen the country's efforts in risk and vulnerability reduction, the following priority areas must be deliberated and agreed upon:

5.1 Political Commitment and Institutional Aspects

There is need to critically analyze the extent to which country's policies and bills on disaster management are dynamic. The specific aims for this exercise will be to;

- Establish the extent to which the policies and bills addresses the present-day disasters which include HIV/AIDS, Terrorism, Conflicts and the place of Refugees.
- Recommend strategies which will enable effective management of these disasters
- Strengthen the current approaches to dealing with fires, Pests, flooding, drought, landslides and other sporadic but well known disasters.
- Identify effective ways of enhancing the capacities of the communities, civil societies and government official in risk reduction.
- Identify ways of enhancing collaboration and networking between all stakeholders in disaster management and especially ensuring active participation of the private sector.

- Make recommendations on how to strengthen the current structures for disaster management and ensure they are in tandem with the regional and global efforts on risk reduction.
- Mainstream gender issues in disaster risk reduction strategies.
- Strengthen law enforcement on risk reduction.
- Enhance strategies on resource mobilization for risk reduction.

5.2 Research

It is evident that without research and information there will be minimal operation. The Country needs to articulate a research agenda for risk reduction, risk identification, targeting, mainstreaming, disaster concepts and management.

It is also clear that the National Council of Science and technology has not been brought on board and yet they can facilitate and be mandated to play an umbrella role in research activity.

5.3 Information Dissemination

It is evident that there is a lot of information and activity on risk reduction in various line ministries and agencies. This information however is not decentralized and thus there are problems of access and sharing. It would be a good start for the establishment of a central clearinghouse for information and communication. It is suggested that the National Disaster Unit and the Ministry of Information should be able to package information at grass roots level on disaster and risk reduction.

Within this docket, linkages between risk reduction and the national disaster management plan can be clarified and disseminated to all stakeholders from time to time.

5.4 Resource mobilization and fundraising

This is a critical aspect for risk reduction activity. There is need to address this aspect, with a view to bringing together stakeholders, through discussion, sound mechanisms and MOUs can be developed for resource mobilization and sharing on a priority basis.

Organisations like the Red Cross and the Government of Kenya, have already developed models for collaboration and sharing of resources that can be replicated and adopted

5.5 Capacity building

The work already in progress in the country is commendable; there is need however to address the training needs of professional in the districts that are in charge of disaster management. Capacity building will evolve element of ensuring that professionals are included in disaster management structures and the level of involvement