

Recurrent Monitoring Survey (RMS-2) Results from Rounds 1, 2, and 3 Summary of Findings



Preliminary analyses of data collected as part of the Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth (PREG) II Impact Evaluation indicate how selected resilience programming and emergency assistance have helped households despite persistent exposure to severe drought and sharp price increases. A more detailed analysis of interventions will follow RMS Round 4 data collection. Based on discussions of findings from earlier rounds, we looked closely at fodder programs. This analysis examines whether borrowing counters high inflation. The analyses have also benefitted from reviewing PREG partners' Joint Work Plans, and the PREG partner provided information about systems-level interventions. These led to hypotheses and tests of the role of transformative resilience capacities in building absorptive and adaptive capacities.

Even though hunger and food insecurity worsened overall across rounds:

Food and cash assistance were associated with a lower probability that a household experienced moderate to severe hunger. Changes were statistically significant but small.

Even if every household received food and cash assistance, the percentage of households reporting moderate to severe hunger would drop about 1%. Neither food nor cash assistance was widespread. About 17% of households reported receiving cash assistance in Rounds 1 and 2, increasing to 37% in Round 3. By then, four rainy seasons had failed. The overall increase was due almost entirely to changes in Turkana, where the percentage of households reporting receiving cash increased from 10% in Round 1 to 77% in Round 3. Across counties, the percentage of households reporting food assistance dropped from 20% to 10%. Households also reported that assistance was delayed or interrupted.

Households that borrowed cash in early RMS rounds reported higher HDDS and lower severity of food price shocks in later rounds compared to households that did not borrow. The effects were relatively large.

Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) was 1 point higher on a scale of 0–12, and shock severity was 0.3 lower (0–8 scale). These results may be explained by the fact that an inflationary environment creates advantages to borrowing since the real cost of repaying loans decreases over time. However, less than 8% of households surveyed reported borrowing money. These findings suggest a redirection for Village Savings and Loans Associations and other financial service providers in times of high inflation, in particular, to shift focus from promoting savings to providing borrowing opportunities. Additional analysis will look at cash and non-cash borrowing from other sources, such as the provision of credit from local merchants.

LIVESTOCK ASSETS

Owners of goats and/or sheep who used *emergency feed and fodder programs* had a smaller *decline in those assets* than households that did not use fodder/feed programs.

Household survey data show that less than 8% of households owning large livestock reported receipt of livestock fodder in RMS 2 Round 1, dropping to 5% in Round 3. These households were in Wajir and Marsabit. This finding suggests expanding access to emergency feed and fodder can help maintain livestock herds.

RESILIENCE CAPACITIES

Households participating in one or more types of household-level resilience programming had higher absorptive and adaptive capacities compared to non-participant households.

Systems-level PREG programming was associated with higher transformative capacity. Survey data indicate that households residing in communities with higher levels of transformative capacity in Round 1 were better able to maintain or increase absorptive capacity in later rounds. Analysis following Round 4 will examine the relative contribution of specific types of infrastructure (health services, agriculture and livestock services, water, transportation and communications, and markets) to support households' absorptive and adaptive capacities. Results can help to identify systems-level investments that will help households to rebuild their resilience capacities as they move out of the drought.

PREG BACKGROUND

Following prolonged and severe droughts in northern Kenya in 2008 and 2011, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Feed the Future (FTF) initiative began to address pastoralist vulnerability and resilience in the Arid and Semi-arid Lands (ASALs) of northern Kenya. In partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Government of Kenya (GoK), this effort started with two five-year projects under the Resilience and Economic Growth in Arid Lands (REGAL) program. Two primary strategies of the program were the (1) layering, sequencing, and integrating of activities; and (2) coordinating and harmonizing the resilience-building activities of humanitarian and development

stakeholders. In 2014, this partnership expanded to include over 15 partners from USAID, GoK, WFP, and other implementing partners, forming the “Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth” (PREG) coordination platform. The first phase of PREG was implemented from 2014 to 2017. A second phase, PREG II, commenced programming in 2018.

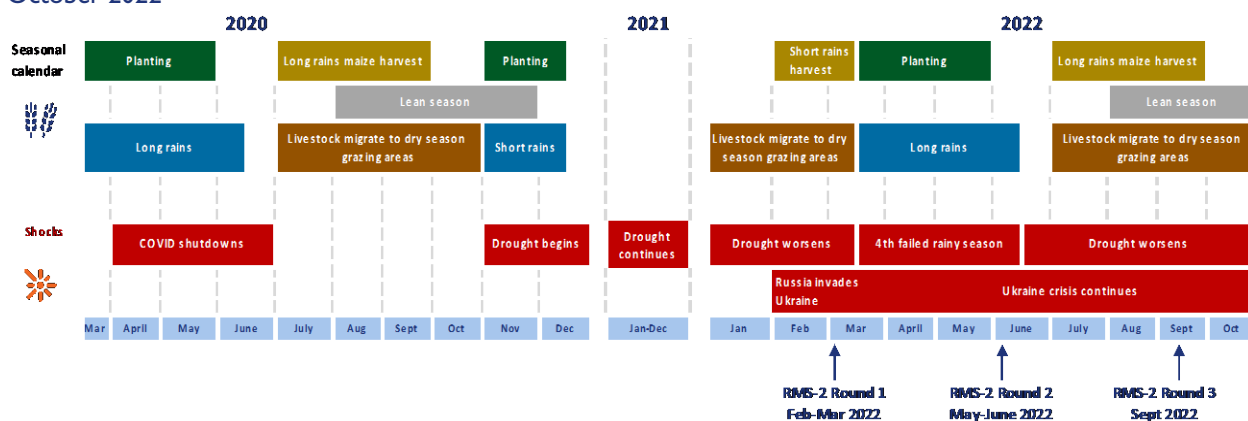
The PREG umbrella brings together humanitarian and development partners and the GoK at national and county levels in nine of the 23 northern Kenyan ASAL counties to strengthen resilience and address underlying vulnerabilities in the region. The PREG model of collaboration has enabled partners to minimize redundancies, promote synergies, and achieve multi-partner collaboration and coordination.

RECURRENT MONITORING SURVEYS (RMS)

Recurrent monitoring surveys are part survey toolkit used in some impact evaluations. They are implemented between baseline and endline surveys to provide close to real-time information about households' exposure and responses to shocks and changes in well-being outcomes. Shocks trigger RMSs, in this case, two failed rainy seasons.¹

This report covers the second RMS in the PREG impact evaluation. It follows the PREG II baseline survey (2018) and Recurrent Monitoring Survey I (2019- 2020). An endline survey is scheduled for fall 2023. PREG RMS 2 has quantitative and qualitative components. (Figure) Each survey round has a qualitative component to provide insights into findings from survey data and provide information to guide research questions and hypotheses. A rigorous analysis of the impact of resilience interventions and emergency assistance on resilience capacities and well-being outcomes will follow Round 4 data collection.

Figure 1. Seasonal calendar, eastern and northern Kenya with shocks and RMS-2 survey dates, March 2020 to October 2022²



The situation in terms of shock severity and food security following RMS 2 Round 3 was worse than ever. Food price shocks and drought continued to be the top shocks. Secondary or downstream shocks, such as livestock disease and high input prices, continue unabated. Key informants estimate that 90% of livestock have died.

Figure 2 shows shocks and survey rounds overlaid on a FEWSnet seasonal calendar. The figure shows that households' ability to prepare for, cope with, and recover from the drought and

¹ See <https://fews.net/east-africa/kenya>

² FEWS NET. <https://fews.net/file/113528>

associated shocks was and continues to be shaped by global events. COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions took place when households should have been preparing for drought. Kenya closed non-essential services, which initially included livestock markets. International border closures and transportation restrictions limited trade. PREG programming was suspended during COVID lockdowns. Global supply chain issues following COVID, shortages of fuel and food due to the Ukraine crisis, inflation, and shortages of donor funding due to both exacerbated already difficult conditions. Neither a drought of this duration nor global shocks were part of PREG's initial assessed risk context.

The three food security measures tracked in RMS-2 were at their lowest levels in Round 3. Key informants reported that low food security translated to widespread malnutrition and that some children and elders were dying from starvation. In addition to farmer-herder conflicts, tribal conflicts, raids, and attacks along roads, which were also reported in other survey rounds, KIIs reported that some households had started to resort to desperate behaviors, neighbors stealing from each other, taking livestock and, in some cases, laundry hanging on the line. These were the first reports of household-level conflict.

The migration of both people and livestock appears to be in a state of flux. Qualitative interviews reported that urban and peri-urban livestock owners were coming to rural areas, and rural livestock owners were taking their animals to other counties and to Ethiopia and Somalia. Despite households' efforts to look for improved conditions through migration, drought conditions persist at their destinations. KIIs and FGDs also reported that shortages of vaccinations and mixing livestock herds during migrations triggered livestock disease. In many cases, entire herds died, livestock owners returned home without animals, and a least one owner committed suicide. Human migration from rural to urban areas has reportedly strained urban infrastructure and resources.



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



About the REAL Award

The Resilience Evaluation, Analysis and Learning (REAL) Associate Award is a consortium-led effort funded by the USAID Center for Resilience. It was established to respond to growing demand among USAID Missions, host governments, implementing organizations, and other key stakeholders for rigorous, yet practical, monitoring, evaluation, strategic analysis, and capacity building support. Led by Save the Children, REAL draws on the expertise of its partners: Food for the Hungry, Mercy Corps, and TANGO International.

Photo Credits

Cover: Tommy Trenchard / Save the Children. Inside: Save the Children

Prepared for

USAID Center for Resilience (C4R)

Disclaimer

This brief is made possible by the generous support and contribution of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents of the materials produced through the REAL Award do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.