

BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE THROUGH RADIO PROGRAMMING IN MAKUENI AND TAITA TAVETA

BACKGROUND



Community members in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) of Kenya are plagued by recurrent droughts. Frequently, their resiliency is weakened due to the limited access to information. However, the use of radio can improve a household's resiliency if community members have sufficient time to plan and respond to mitigate the effects of drought.

To maximize the impact of the resiliency radio program, the USAID Kenya/East Africa Resilience Learning Activity (RLA) collaborated with the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA), Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS), Kenya Metrological Department (KMD) and county officials in the SEK. The program selected each of these actors based on the community's trust in their ability to further inform resiliency strategies through effective dissemination of information for effective planning and response through radio programming.



MESSENGERS & MESSAGES

To effectively apply behavior change principles, RLA recognized that people are more likely to accept and adapt to messages if delivered by prominent and reputable community leaders. Therefore, prior to the radio broadcasts RLA used a recently developed community mapping document by a local service provider that identified community members who are active participants in both county government initiatives and those by other development practitioners.



This approach allowed NDMA, prominent county officials, and the County Executive Committee (CEC) members to send four sets of messages to 24,000 people as an awareness campaign that relied on the trust built by these officials. This trusting relationship enhances the impact of these messages to communities on seasonal rainfall, expected length of rains, appropriate crops for planting, and reinforcing best practices for soil health and livestock management.

LESSONS LEARNED



TIMING: Farmers tend to their crops during the day, therefore, the best times for radio programs are from 6:00am to 8:00am and 7:00pm to 8:30pm.

CONSISTENCY: Repetition of messages is key for reinforcement of best practices. This required multiple broadcasts across multiple popular stations. **MESSENGERS:** The likelihood of listeners to accept and adapt to messages increased when the messages were delivered by reputable community leaders and/or firms. Delivery by trusted community members helps validate the messaging for listeners.

NEXT STEPS

RLA will carry this initiative forward into the PREG continuing the same approach using SMS and messaging with NDMA, county officials and other PREG members to further inform ways that will continue to build on the SEK mechanism and improve resiliency decisions at the household level.

HIGHLIGHTS

Five programs discussing resiliency strategies



Est. over 715,000 people reached through radio



Collaboration with six SEK partners



Memory recall survey indicated 23% message retention for listeners

