



## STRENGTHENING HUMAN SECURITY IN THE BORDER COMMUNITIES OF TURKANA, KENYA

### **Drought Resilience: A regional priority one year after the Horn of Africa drought crisis**

One year after the UN declared famine in two areas of southern Somalia and the Government of Kenya announced that the drought is mounting to a national disaster in the northeastern part of the county; the UN Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS) approves a US\$6.1 Million to support drought resilience building in Turkana, Kenya, and its border communities.

The project 'Strengthening Human Security in the Border Communities of Turkana, Kenya' was launched on 18 July 2012 by Minister Mohamed Elmi; the Minister of State for Northern Kenya and Other Arid Lands together with the UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator for Kenya, Mr. Aeneas Chuma and the Ambassador of Japan to Kenya, Mr. Toshihisa Takata.

'The funded activities aim to improve human security in a context of UN inter-agency coordination through building on the capacities of local community based organizations, local peace committees, local governments and the governmental National Drought Management Authority (NDMA).' Minister Elmi stated at the launch.

The collaborative and integrative nature of this project demonstrates and reflects a change in thinking and approach that has expanded drought response to incorporate resilience building, following the Horn of Africa drought crisis of 2011 in the Horn of Africa.

Projects like the UNTFHS are feeding into broader frameworks and programmes on resilience building in the region, including the Ending Drought Emergencies in the Horn of Africa, an initiative launched in September 2011 in Nairobi during a summit of regional heads of state and governments in response to the severe drought and food crisis that affected 13 million people.

This initiative is spearheaded by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and aims to build resilience to the drought by seeking cooperation across borders on issues such as Natural Resource Management; Market Access and Trade; Livelihood and Basic Social Services, and Disaster Risk Management.

Other earlier partner engagements in response to the 2011 drought included the AU Pledging Conference of 25 August 2011 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and the joint IGAD-African

Development Bank workshop on livestock development and drought preparedness in the Horn of Africa held in Djibouti on 14-15 November 2011.



Isiolo – Kenya. Credit: OCHA Eastern Africa

At the community level, Patrick Katelo, a Pastoralist from Marsabit and programme coordinator for the Pastoralist Community Initiative and Development Assistance, says that the expansion of drought response to include resilience building is influencing programming in the critical areas like water and pasture regeneration. *“But we will start seeing the impact in years to come and not immediately. We are hoping that there will be no extended dry spell period in the rains in October. If we experience dry spells in October, it might extend the impact of the 2011 drought crisis. But we must continue to integrate long term strategies into short term emergency responses to drought”*, he stated to OCHA.

Communities are recovering from the 2011 drought emergency with improved rainfall in the last two seasons. Pastoralists say that they have not fully recovered from the 2011 drought crisis, but are encouraged by increased programming towards building resilience following the 2011 Horn of Africa drought crisis.