



### Fast Facts

**Country:** Kenya

**Duration:** July 2008 to October 2011

**Implementing UN Agencies:** UNDP; UNHCR; UNICEF; WFP

**Other Implementing Partners:** National Ministries; NGOs

**Budget:** \$ 2,073,200.48

**Key Words:** Refugees; climate adaptation; post-conflict peacebuilding; access to basic social services; income generation

## BACKGROUND

As civil unrest and violent conflict in Somalia, Ethiopia and Sudan forced hundreds of thousands of refugees to seek safety across their borders with Kenya, large refugee camps emerged in the northern regions of Turkana and Garissa. Already among the poorest regions of Kenya with frequent droughts threatening food and economic security, the influx of refugees added additional pressures on vulnerable communities. The sudden rise in population led to competition over scarce resources such as safe drinking water, firewood and food. Additionally, the proliferation of small arms in and around the refugee camps increased crime both within the camps and the

surrounding communities, which threatened the physical security of refugees and their host communities. Meanwhile, as the international community provided vital support to the refugees, tensions escalated as vulnerable host communities were not receiving the essential assistance and services they also desperately required. Subsequently there was an urgent need for comprehensive measures to reduce tension in the areas surrounding the refugee camps and to compliment the relief provided to refugees with improved living conditions for the host communities.

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the project was to reduce tensions and improve the living conditions of host communities and refugees in the targeted regions of Turkana and Garissa. To this end, the project (i) built partnerships and empowered local communities to consolidate peace and improve communal harmony; (ii) increased

use of clean, safe and sustainable water supply systems for households, schools and health centres; (iii) improved school enrolment rates; and (iv) strengthened food security in the targeted communities.

### BENEFICIARIES

The project directly benefitted a total of 160,000 people in the host communities surrounding the refugee camps in Lokichokio, Kakuma and Dadaab. Moreover, some 250,000 refugees also benefitted from

better relations with local communities as well as improved services and environmental conditions within and around the camps.



## NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

(i) To contribute to conflict resolution and peacebuilding in the region, the project established partnerships with community leaders not only from Kenya but also from neighbouring Sudan and Uganda. The engagement of leaders from neighbouring countries was especially beneficial for addressing persistent cross-border armed violence which had threatened the human security of vulnerable groups including women, children and refugees. In addition, six Women Peace Forums led by women leaders were formed in three cross-border areas to facilitate violence reduction and community peace dialogues and to promote understanding of human rights and good governance.

(ii) In an arid region exposed to frequent droughts, scarcity of water was one of the main challenges faced by communities in Turkana and Garissa. Through a combination of protection and empowerment measures, the project provided access to safe water to 46,000 community members and more than 68,000 livestock. As protection measures, boreholes,

sanitation facilities, water tanks and livestock troughs were constructed. On the other hand, the community members were empowered through training to effectively manage water resources and the formulation of water management committees to operate and maintain water sources and raise awareness of water-borne diseases and hygiene issues.

(iii) Lastly, participatory Community Development Training was conducted to build the capacity of communities to identify, implement and sustain their own development activities. Women and youth groups were trained on livelihoods diversification and were provided with small business enterprise development grants that enabled 270 households to initiate their own businesses. The project also improved learning environments for girls and boys by constructing essential school infrastructure, including classrooms, solar lighting systems, dormitories, offices and dining facilities. In one of the schools supported by the project, the enrolment rate of girls increased from 25% to 41%.

## LESSONS LEARNED

A key element that contributed to the project's success was the engagement of refugees and community members in the decision-making process throughout the project, starting from the early stages of the project design. By engaging refugees and community members in this way, the project ensured that its interventions addressed the priorities and the special needs of both the host communities and refugees, particularly those who were most vulnerable. Mobilizing refugees and community members to

contribute to the design and implementation of the project also helped nurture a sense of ownership, which was vital for the sustainability of the project's activities beyond the duration of the project. Furthermore, by engaging refugees and local communities, special attention was given to the specific context of the region, including the cross-border political dynamics, interactions between the host communities and refugees, as well as the harsh climatic conditions of the region.