



UGANDA: USAID SECURING PEACE AND PROMOTING PROSPERITY (EKISIL) ACTIVITY

CLIMATE RISK MANAGEMENT CASE STUDY

Executive Summary

The USAID Securing Peace and Promoting Prosperity (EKISIL) Activity (November 2017-April 2023) builds peace and sustains livelihoods in Karamoja, Uganda by strengthening communities' access to and management of water and pasture. The USAID EKISIL team recognized that improving capacity to manage resource-related conflict in Karamoja's Abim, Kaabong, Kotido, and Moroto districts increased stability and built resilience to climate stressors and shocks, especially variable and uncertain rainfall and droughts. To manage climate risks that contribute to household instability and heighten conflict, the project implemented a series of climate risk management (CRM) actions that enabled formal and informal institutions to peacefully oversee and share communal natural resources, including developing community- and government-level agreements, policies, and resource management processes. This case study examines these actions and, where possible, quantifies and monetizes their observed benefits to the communities that

USAID EKISIL engages. These CRM actions contributed to EKISIL's success in increasing livestock value, strengthening management and productivity of livestock watering resource facilities, diversifying livelihood options to generate household income, improving access to natural resources, and increasing women's engagement in socioeconomic activities.

The USAID EKISIL activity demonstrates the value of adopting a formal CRM process to assess and proactively plan for climate risks to protect investments in democracy, human rights, and governance projects. The activity's CRM actions aim to manage climate risks that exacerbate conflict, while building resilience by conserving natural resources, diversifying livelihoods, reconciling community conflict, and building trust between communities at risk of conflict.

KEY BENEFITS OF USAID EKISIL'S CRM ACTIONS

- ✓ Avoided loss of 10,000-20,000 head of cattle per year with an estimated annual monetary benefit of \$1.7 million to \$3.4 million
- ✓ At Karamoja's Kobebe Dam, provided more than 2 million livestock and 30,000 pastoralists access to water and grazing land annually
- ✓ Organized the Kobebe Dam Peace Dividend project that resulted in 180 temporary jobs, 4,050 tree plantings, nine community members trained in contracting processes, and 15,000 hectares of restored land
- ✓ Catalyzed resettlement of 600 hectares of fertile land, previously unsafe to access because of conflict

“People are no longer fighting. Why? Because they have a natural resource that is required by everyone. If you have water, you have peace,” said Mr. Andrew Napaja, Uganda Local Governments’ Association, Moroto District Council Chairperson.

Credit: USAID (2021).



Introduction

The goal of USAID EKISIL—which means “peace” in the local language of Karamoja—is to build peace by convening communities to manage complex and dynamic social, economic, ecological, and governance issues that can fuel conflict. Increasingly, resource imbalances and competition for natural resources, especially water and grazing land, have exacerbated conflict and violent disputes in Karamoja.^{1,2} Climate shocks and stressors, such as droughts and increased temperatures, further stress natural resources and increase competition by limiting access to water for livestock and increasing risk of livestock pests and disease. Heavy rainfall on dry soils leads to flooding and reduces infiltration, contributing to water scarcity, overgrazing, and agricultural land degradation.³ The USAID EKISIL team, which includes USAID Uganda Mission activity managers and implementing partner, Mercy Corps, operates on the principle that strengthening resilience to climate shocks and stressors that contribute to natural resource scarcity will help achieve the project’s primary goal of reducing conflict.

USAID EKISIL initiated its CRM process in response to USAID’s 2016 CRM policy. Robert Bagyenda, USAID Uganda Environment and Natural Resources Management Project Management Specialist, said the team reviewed historical knowledge about the region’s climate, and confirmed that many conflicts arose during the dry season, when competition for access to water and pasture increased. In its climate risk screening process, the USAID EKISIL team determined that the risk of climate-related conflict in Karamoja was “high”.⁴

“We see the link between conflict and access to natural resources in relation to prolonged drought and climate change variability. If we don’t address that issue during the prolonged dry season, then we are not likely to achieve the project’s overall goal of mitigating or reducing conflict and building peace in the region,” said Bagyenda. Considering CRM in activity design underscored the importance of long-term natural resources planning that anticipates and prepares

¹ Mercy Corps, 2016. Karamoja Strategic Resilience Assessment Final Report. Available: https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/Uganda_STRESS_Karamoja_Report.pdf

² Abrahams, 2021. “Land is Now the Biggest Gun”: Climate Change, Conflict, and the Telling Case of Karamoja, Uganda.

³ Okwi, Paul Okiira, 2002. Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA), Valuing Tropical Grasslands: The Case of Overstocking in Northeastern Uganda. Available: <https://media.africaportal.org/documents/ssrr-series-24.pdf>

⁴ USAID, 2017. Initial Environmental Examination & Request for Categorical Exclusion, Amendment #1 – Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DRG).

for more intense droughts, increasing climate variability, and risk of conflict related to resource scarcity.

As a result of the CRM process, USAID EKISIL developed and implemented actions based on its climate risk assessment and information about climate risks from two other sources: USAID Uganda's climate risk assessment for a 2017 countrywide initial environmental examination (IEE)⁵, and PEACE III⁶, another USAID-funded conflict management project led by the EKISIL activity's partners. (For brevity, this case study refers to these actions as "CRM actions" because they reduce identified risks associated with climate-related shocks and stressors.) This case study describes, quantifies, and monetizes the value of USAID EKISIL's CRM actions during the project's first two contract periods. Some CRM actions deliver benefits that are difficult to quantify or monetize due to insufficient and inconsistent economic and socioeconomic regional data,⁷ such as the increase in livestock value in Karamoja districts that USAID EKISIL targets. Other CRM benefits may not yet be fully realized because activities are ongoing, such as efforts to leverage funds for activity-led resource management plans. Therefore, this case study focuses on observed benefits that can be quantified based on information gathered from public sources, USAID Uganda, and the EKISIL activity's partners from 2017 through 2021.

USAID EKISIL's successes show how building capacity to manage climate shocks and stressors can improve community and institutional collaboration on natural resources management, and benefit livelihoods—reducing conflict and building peace as a result. USAID EKISIL's CRM actions include:

- Facilitated two Natural Resource Sharing Agreements (RSAs) between Karamoja sub-counties to benefit four communities.
- Coordinated at community, district, and national levels to improve management of livestock watering sources, including at the 2.3 million cubic meter-capacity Kobebe Reservoir. Before USAID EKISIL involvement, the Kobebe Reservoir had dried during drought years and contributed to conflict over sharing depleted pasture and water. To help address the problem, USAID EKISIL planted trees around the dam and engaged the Jie and Matheniko youth in cleaning the dam and maintaining the trees, which has reduced evaporation and conflicts.
- Strengthened government policy and systems to address weak governance of natural resources and economic drivers of conflict, by establishing by-laws to uphold the RSAs, and developing and mobilizing security, sanctions, enforcement, and services to manage peaceful use of natural resources.

⁵ *ibid*

⁶ USAID PEACE III:

https://2012-2017.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/PEACE_III_Fact_Sheet_August_2017.pdf

⁷ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and Tufts University, 2019. Karamoja and Northern Uganda Comparative Analysis of Livelihood Recovery in the Post-Conflict Periods. Available:

<http://www.fao.org/3/ca5760en/CA5760EN.pdf>



A Karamoja pastoralist leads livestock to grazing pasture and water. Source: Dodoth Agro Pastoralists Development Organization (DADO), EKISIL Activity partner.

These interventions increased livestock value, strengthened management and productivity of livestock watering sites and facilities, improved access to natural resources and fertile land, diversified livelihood options to generate household income, and increased women's engagement in trade and economic and peacebuilding opportunities. The following sections describe the need for, and the details of, these CRM actions.

Climate Risks to Natural Resource-based Livelihoods

Agricultural, agropastoral, and pastoral systems are the primary livelihood sources in Karamoja.⁸ Overgrazing, intensive agriculture production practices, poor natural resource and water infrastructure management, and the commercialization of land degrade resources necessary to sustain these livelihoods.^{9,10,11,12}

⁸ USAID, 2017. Country Specific Information (CSI): Karamoja, Uganda.

https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/Karamoja_CSI_final_edited_4.10.17.pdf

⁹ Mercy Corps, 2015. Pathways from Peace to Resilience: Evidence from the Greater Horn of Africa on the Links between Conflict Management and Resilience to Food Security Shocks.

https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/PATHWAYS%20FROM%20PEACE%20REPORT_FINAL%20ONLINE_3.pdf

¹⁰ Mercy Corps, 2019. EKISIL, An Executive Summary Of The Long-term Management Plan For Water Dams In Karamoja.

¹¹ Feed the Future, 2016. Resilience and Risk in Pastoralist Areas: Recent Trends in Diversified and Alternative Livelihoods. Available: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pa00m1pz.pdf

¹² USAID, 2017. Country Specific Information (CSI): Karamoja, Uganda.

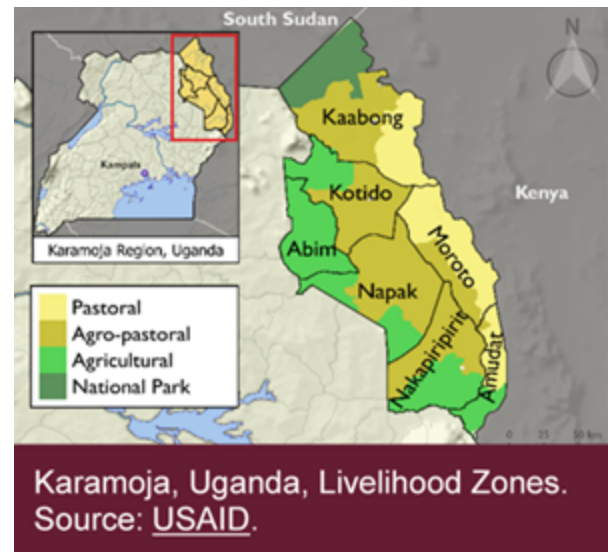
https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/Karamoja_CSI_final_edited_4.10.17.pdf

In some areas, conflict also has contributed to natural resource degradation,¹³ including tree and brush damage or removal,¹⁴ and has been exacerbated by competition for scarce resources.¹⁵

The Government of Uganda has attempted to manage resource-based conflict in the region. The Karamoja disarmament campaign that began in 2006 aimed to end cattle raiding that had become increasingly violent due to proliferation of weapons in the region. As a security measure, the government corralled livestock in areas near military encampments. However, this policy limited pastoralists' mobility and access to livestock and natural resources. It also led to overcrowding, overgrazing, and unsustainable use of limited water sources, which increased tensions and reduced ability to manage shocks and stressors.¹⁶

Additionally, poor soil fertility and declining soil moisture has led agriculturalists to expand crop production areas, further reducing pastoralist mobility and access to grazing land.¹⁷ Pastoralists continue to face challenges in maintaining their livelihoods as social, political, economic, and environmental dynamics evolve and as climate impacts on natural resources make it more difficult to meet subsistence needs.

To adapt to the regional climate, many pastoralists migrate seasonally, especially during the dry season, to access critical water and grazing sources. Agropastoralists supplement their income with crop cultivation as conditions allow.^{18,19,20} However, climate changes and spatial and temporal climate variability are contributing to climate shocks, including droughts, dry spells, floods, and heavy rains.²¹



¹³ USAID, 2011. Climate Change and Conflict in Uganda: The Cattle Corridor and Karamoja.

https://www.climatelinks.org/sites/default/files/asset/document/Climate_Change_and_Conflic_%2520in_Uganda.pdf

¹⁴ USAID EKISIL Activity. Personal communication with EKISIL Activity staff.

¹⁵ USAID, 2017. Country Specific Information (CSI): Karamoja, Uganda.

https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/Karamoja_CSI_final_edited_4.10.17.pdf

¹⁶ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and Tufts University, 2019. Karamoja and Northern Uganda Comparative analysis of livelihood recovery in the post-conflict periods.

<http://www.fao.org/3/ca5760en/CA5760EN.pdf>

¹⁷ USAID, 2017. Climate Risks in Food for Peace Geographies, Karamoja Region, Uganda.

https://www.climatelinks.org/sites/default/files/asset/document/20170130_Karamoja_Food%20Security%20Climate%20Screening.pdf

¹⁸ Feed the Future, 2016. Resilience and Risk in Pastoralist Areas: Recent Trends in Diversified and Alternative Livelihoods. Available: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pa00m1pz.pdf

¹⁹ Daniel Abrahams, 2020. Land is Now the Biggest Gun: Climate Change and Conflict in Karamoja, Uganda. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17565529.2020.1862740>

²⁰ USAID, 2017. Country Specific Information (CSI): Karamoja, Uganda.

https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/Karamoja_CSI_final_edited_4.10.17.pdf

²¹ Ibid.

“Because people could not get enough from the animals, they also become limp just like the livestock because of lack of access to milk or other products. This also leads to migrations and movements in pursuit of pasture and other natural resources,” said Mr. Luka Lokalei, Chairperson of the Peace Committee and a member of the Natural Resource Sharing Committee.

Source: USAID (2021).



Higher temperatures and increased length or intensity of dry periods degrade grazing land and infrastructure,²² decrease soil moisture, intensify water scarcity and evaporation of surface water, increase wildfire risk, reduce forage availability, and increase risk of livestock dehydration, pests, and disease.²³ These climate impacts intensify competition for limited natural resources, reinforcing the potential for conflict.

“We learned that, for [USAID EKISIL’s target communities], resource instability combined with climate stressors like drought have led to food insecurity, shortages, shocks, and famine-related mortality,” said Robert Bagyenda.

Climate Risk Management in Action

“During EKISIL’s implementation, we saw that climate change is a threat that matters to the issues of conflict in the region,” said Mark Guti, USAID EKISIL Chief of Party. “We assessed the stressors of climate change, including drought, that are leading to conflict because they create struggles for water and pasture and displace people.”

The climate risk assessment process helped USAID and its implementing partner analyze climate shocks and stressors specific to Karamoja and develop actions to manage risks related to natural resource scarcity. USAID EKISIL also selected CRM actions that amplify efforts to build social cohesion and strengthen the functioning of informal and formal institutions and collaboration among them.

²² Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2020. Climate Change and Land, Summary for Policymakers. Chapter 4, Land Degradation, 4.2 Land Degradation in the Context of Climate Change. Available: <https://www.ipcc.ch/srccl/chapter/chapter-4/>

²³ USAID, 2017. Climate Risks in Food for Peace Geographies, Karamoja Region, Uganda. Available: https://www.climate-links.org/sites/default/files/asset/document/20170130_Karamoja_Food%20Security%20Climate%20Screening.pdf



“Our livestock have multiplied. There is free movement without fear of insecurity,” said Ms. Natalina Moru Achia, Women’s Peace Forum Member.

Credit: USAID (2021).

Aligning CRM actions with these activity priorities reduced conflict by uniting people and institutions to advance and protect shared interests, including regional security and natural resources. Ultimately, this CRM approach is building resilience and regional capacity to withstand and recover from conflict and economic and climate shocks and stressors.²⁴

CRM actions included:

- **Initiating two cross-border natural resource sharing agreements (RSAs), each co-signed by two communities in support of water and pasture sharing.** Interethnic tensions and other factors have led to frequent clashes between the Dodoth of Kaabong and the Jie of Kotido, destabilizing border communities of Uganda and Kenya. USAID EKISIL facilitated a year-long process that culminated in the signing of two RSAs—one between Loyoro, Uganda and Naperimoru, Kenya, and one between Rengen, Uganda and Sidok, Kenya. The RSAs formalized pasture and water sharing processes and include 11 conditions pertaining to gun restrictions, joint environmental protection and preservation approaches, shared settlement strategies in border areas, dispute resolution protocol, and reporting of stolen livestock. These conditions allow these primarily pastoral and crop farming communities to manage natural resources more adeptly, especially when climate-related shocks and stressors affect natural resource availability and quality. The RSAs have fostered peace and resettlement in the two cross-border communities, each of which covers approximately 300 hectares of fertile land.²⁵ USAID EKISIL team members explained that considering CRM in the development of the RSAs facilitated long-term thinking about the sustainability of water and pasture resource use at a time when climate impacts are affecting—and will continue to affect—availability of natural resources.
- **Coordinating with stakeholders to build sustainable natural resource management strategies, funding streams, and community access.** USAID EKISIL supports long-term management of livestock watering facilities in Karamoja in coordination with local government authorities. The EKISIL-led long-term management plan for water dams in

²⁴ Mercy Corps, 2015. Pathways from Peace to Resilience: Evidence from the Greater Horn of Africa on the Links between Conflict Management and Resilience to Food Security Shocks. Available: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/PATHWAYS%20FROM%20PEACE%20REPORT_FINAL%20ONLINE_3.pdf

²⁵ USAID EKISIL Activity. Personal communication with EKISIL Activity staff.

Karamoja helps manage climate change impacts on water availability and moderate emergence of conflict related to natural resource scarcity. The plan helps sustain the Kobebe Reservoir through restoration and management activities, including access schedules, tree plantings, erosion control, and community engagement and education. As reservoir usage steadily increases, the agreements established in the management plan limit environmental and infrastructure degradation.²⁶

- **Strengthening the institutional environment to ensure government policy and systems address natural resource management and economic drivers of conflict.** USAID EKISIL is working with institutional representatives at community, district, and national levels to develop processes, policies, and collaborative efforts that catalyze and sustain equitable and effective natural resources management. This action helps better maintain natural resources endangered by rainfall variability and drought while building communities' resilience through improved access to limited natural resources and cooperative activities to protect livelihoods. For example, USAID EKISIL facilitated the establishment of community by-laws to uphold the two RSAs,²⁷ thereby reducing livestock theft, unsanctioned tree and brush cutting, and other illegal activities.²⁸ USAID EKISIL also facilitated development and deployment of security, sanctions, enforcement, and public services, to sustain peaceful sharing of natural resources.²⁹

CRM Outcomes and Benefits

The USAID EKISIL activity's CRM actions have contributed to multiple successful outcomes, as Table 1 summarizes. These CRM outcomes have produced important benefits for the activity's beneficiaries, which the next sections describe in detail. This case study does not analyze benefits associated with all outcomes in Table 1; rather, it focuses on quantifying and monetizing benefits for which relevant data are available.

Table 1. EKISIL's CRM Actions and Outcomes

Climate Risks	CRM Actions	CRM Outcomes
Facilitated two RSAs between sub-counties		
Water and pasture scarcity and shortages caused by rainfall variability and drought	Facilitated yearlong negotiation process resulting in two cross-border RSAs that regulate use of scarce resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced human-caused degradation of natural resources • Resolved existing conflicts and reduced risk of future conflicts over natural resources • Improved communication and social cohesion between Dodoth and Jie communities • Improved livestock productivity and decreased pests and disease • Increased informal trade • Made it safe to settle in fertile areas and build infrastructure and farms

²⁶ Mercy Corps, 2019. EKISIL, An Executive Summary of the Long-term Management Plan for Water Dams in Karamoja, Special Focus On Kobebe Dam In Moroto District.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Nakapelimoru Sub County Lower Local Government, Uganda, 2020. EKISIL, Annex 3, Bye Law on Resource Sharing Agreement-Nakapelimoru and Loyo Sub Counties.

²⁹ Mercy Corps, 2019. EKISIL, An Executive Summary Of The Long-term Management Plan For Water Dams In Karamoja, Special Focus On Kobebe Dam In Moroto District.

	Conducting ongoing review of RSAs with signatories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating opportunities to respond to changing climate conditions and adaptively manage natural resources • Reconfirming communities' sustained commitment to resource sharing • Managing emerging issues to prevent conflict
Coordinated with stakeholders to manage livestock watering facilities, notably the Kobebe Reservoir		
Animal dehydration, pests, disease, and mortality during drought Increased evaporation, leading to water shortages and competition between people and livestock for limited resources	Improved access to and effective utilization of watering facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved livestock productivity and decreased pests and disease • Increased coordination with pastoralist communities and Uganda Wildlife Authority (e.g., livestock watering schedules) • Reduced long-distance travel for water • Enhanced security and conflict-reduction practices
Environmental and infrastructure degradation caused by flooding, drought, and increased temperatures	Strengthened long-term management of water facilities through infrastructure maintenance and environmental restoration planning, and increased community capacity to manage and share the resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of community members trained to recognize climate impacts on natural resources and infrastructure • Heightened community engagement and social cohesion through focus groups, stakeholder consultation, community working group, community meetings • Improved capacity of staff to manage watering facilities • Increased revenue from user fees from kraals (livestock shelter/storage)
	Improved ecological landscape at watering facilities through restoration and rangeland conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased tree canopy cover • Increased compliance with illegal poaching and unregulated grass burning (i.e. pest control) laws • Reduced erosion of embankment and siltation of water sources • Increased carbon storage • Increased community engagement and social cohesion to support restoration and long-term dam sustainability
Strengthened government policy and systems to address weak governance of natural resources and economic drivers of conflict		
Increased scarcity of water and pasture resources	Developed new government/public systems for natural resource management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased livelihood options (e.g. fish farming, wildlife conservation, livestock markets, tourism, trade) • Increased women's engagement in peace and livelihood activities • Increased regional and cross-border trade including increased livestock trade • Strengthened government capacity to manage settlement and cultivation policy • Improved public services, including education, telecommunications, health center, and roads
Water and pasture scarcity and shortages caused by rainfall variability and drought	Passed by-laws to uphold natural resource sharing agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforced communities' sustained commitment to resource sharing • Prompted sub-county and district stakeholder lobbying for government investment in boreholes, dams, and deployment of security along grazing areas to catalyze equitable and peaceful sharing of pasture and water.

Increased Livestock Value

USAID EKISIL's CRM actions to facilitate RSAs, coordinate funding for and management of livestock watering facilities, and build capacity for natural resource governance have increased pastoralists' access to water and grazing land. This improved access has lowered livestock mortality from dehydration and malnutrition, diminished livestock theft, and reduced livestock disease and pest outbreaks that arise when pastoralists cannot safely migrate and must concentrate animals in one area.³⁰ Better livestock conditions have increased animal longevity and productivity to improve regional livestock sales and overall value.

In Abim, Kaabong, Kotido, and Moroto districts, improved natural resources access has allowed beneficiaries to support larger herds of livestock that strengthen subsistence and generate more income.³¹ These Karamoja districts have a combined population of approximately 870,000 people, and an average of 48 percent of households there rely on pastoralism or agropastoralism.³² The latest available data on the value of Karamoja livestock transactions extends through 2017,³³ which coincides with the start of the reporting time frame for this study.

The Uganda Bureau of Statistics conducted a Census of Livestock in May 2021, but because data from this census is not yet available, it is difficult to quantitatively evaluate changes in livestock production and income resulting from USAID EKISIL's actions. Therefore, this case study estimates the total value of avoided losses of cattle due to CRM and based on local stakeholders' observations. In interviews, beneficiaries described how limited water availability constrains herd sizes. One estimated that lack of water, especially in drought years, can result in the loss of 10,000 to 20,000 head of livestock per year from dehydration, starvation, and disease.

USAID EKISIL beneficiaries confirmed that RSAs built community capacity to resolve and prevent resource-related conflict, improved communication, supported informal trade, and made it safe to settle in fertile areas.³⁴

³⁰ USAID, 2017. Climate Risks in Food for Peace Geographies, Karamoja Region, Uganda. Available: https://www.climatelinks.org/sites/default/files/asset/document/20170130_Karamoja_Food%20Security%20Climate%20Screening.pdf

³¹ USAID EKISIL Activity. Personal communication with EKISIL Activity beneficiaries.

³² Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2018. Resilience Analysis in Karamoja, Uganda. Available: <http://www.fao.org/3/i8365en/i8365EN.pdf>

³³ Aklilu, Y., 2017. Livestock Trade in Karamoja, Uganda: An Update of Market Dynamics and Trends. Karamoja Resilience Support Unit, USAID/Uganda, Kampala. Available: <https://karamojaresilience.org/publications/item/livestock-trade-in-karamoja-uganda-an-updatepof-market-dynamics-and-trends>

³⁴ USAID EKISIL Activity. Personal communication with EKISIL Activity beneficiaries.

“The benefits of shared grazing land resulted in free movement of people and livestock, encouraged trade and commerce, maintained peace and security, and supported cooperation with the governments of Uganda and Kenya and development partners that resulted in animal vaccinations and cross-border activities,” said Mr. Lomuria Ariko, a Member of the Peace and Natural Resource Sharing committees.

Source: USAID (2021).



Improved Management and Productivity of Livestock Watering Resource Facilities

Flooding, drought, and increased temperatures cause environmental and infrastructure degradation to dams and reservoirs,³⁵ including the Kobebe Reservoir, which the Government of Uganda built in 2010 to convert a degraded area.³⁶ USAID EKISIL coordinated with the Uganda Wildlife Authority and stakeholders to increase pastoralist access to the reservoir, located on a wildlife reserve, and ensure its preservation. USAID EKISIL’s operation and maintenance (O&M) plan, currently undergoing stakeholder review, is designed to protect the reservoir’s natural and built infrastructure, preserve water, and protect reservoir recharge.

Increasing access to water resources through improved management of the Kobebe Dam could help EKISIL beneficiaries avoid livestock losses and potentially increase livestock production. If beneficiaries avoid the loss of 10,000 to 20,000 head of cattle per year, this could provide annual monetary benefits between \$1.7 million and \$3.4 million (6 billion to 12 billion Ugandan Shillings), using the average price of approximately 600,000 Ugandan Shillings (168 USD) per head of cattle.

³⁵ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2020. Climate Change and Land, Summary for Policymakers. Chapter 4, Land Degradation, 4.2 Land Degradation in the Context of Climate Change. Available: <https://www.ipcc.ch/srccl/chapter/chapter-4/>

³⁶ USAID EKISIL Activity. Personal communication with EKISIL Activity beneficiaries.

The plan estimates \$170,000 for first-year O&M investments,³⁷ which USAID EKISIL is seeking to leverage from other funders and local sources to increase local ownership and maintenance of the dam. Initial implementation of the plan has helped realize CRM benefits such as more access to water for livestock, increased water quantity at the dam following environmental restoration efforts, and engagement with and training of community members and pastoralists in leadership roles to support dam upkeep, which has improved social cohesion.³⁸

The Kobebe Reservoir currently meets water demand through effective management of livestock watering facilities and interventions to retain water capacity at around 74 percent (6.25 meters deep). Before USAID EKISIL's interventions, the reservoir had dried out during drought years. Water demand at Kobebe Reservoir is projected to reach 6.85 million cubic meters annually, the equivalent of livestock consuming the full capacity of the reservoir three times over.³⁹ The activity's O&M plan for the reservoir strives to meet future water demand by managing surface water sources that flow into the reservoir, including seasonal rainfall and inbound streams, while continuing to prevent embankment erosion and siltation of the reservoir, which reduces capacity.

Mr. Andrew Napaja, Uganda Local Governments' Association Moroto District Council Chairperson, said CRM actions benefit pastoralists by reducing competition for scarce natural resources. He also noted an indirect benefit is increased government ability to focus on infrastructure planning and cross-sectoral collaboration and partnerships to support pastoralists.

Diversified Livelihood Options to Generate Household Income

Kobebe Dam Peace Dividend Project

USAID EKISIL organized the Kobebe Dam Peace Dividend Project to restore the landscape around the Kobebe Reservoir, degraded by a decade of livestock damage, flooding, drought, and high temperatures.⁴⁰ The Peace Dividend project advanced USAID EKISIL's CRM action to implement a long-term management plan for water dams.

The project engages communities to rehabilitate natural resources and invest in water and pasture preservation, livelihoods, and youth engagement around the Kobebe Dam.⁴¹ Benefits include:

- 180 temporary tree planting and bush clearing jobs created for community members, predominantly youth from Turkana, Kenya, and Matheniko, Uganda
- Nine community members (including two women) trained for the Community Working Group contracting process
- 15,000 hectares of land restored

³⁷ Mercy Corps, 2019. EKISIL, An Executive Summary Of The Long-term Management Plan For Water Dams In Karamoja.

³⁸ USAID EKISIL Activity. Personal communication with EKISIL Activity beneficiaries.

³⁹ Mercy Corps, 2019. EKISIL, An Executive Summary Of The Long-term Management Plan For Water Dams In Karamoja.

⁴⁰ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2020. Climate Change and Land, Summary for Policymakers. Chapter 4, Land Degradation, 4.2 Land Degradation in the Context of Climate Change. Available: <https://www.ipcc.ch/srccl/chapter/chapter-4/>

⁴¹ Mercy Corps, 2018. EKISIL, MOU for Kobebe Peace Dividend project.

“Because of the support of this project we have cross-border trade. Our people drive their livestock to sell in Kenya, and Kenyans also sell their products here. We have been able to build a friendship in Kenya and in other districts because of EKISIL and the interactions it has enabled us to have,” said Ms. Clementina Lochoro, a Member of the Women’s Peace Forum and the Kobebe Dam Community Working Group.

Source: USAID (2021).



New Markets and Cross-Border Trade for Women

USAID EKISIL’s CRM actions directly contributed to livestock productivity and value, which in turn produced indirect benefits of livelihood diversification and income generation. Beneficiaries stated that markets and cross-border trade emerged alongside new opportunities for livestock transactions, which helped raise family incomes.

Women’s engagement in USAID EKISIL, an activity objective and indicator, contributed to outcomes like social cohesion and economic gains. Women directly participated in CRM actions, including the formation of RSAs and the EKISIL-facilitated Kobebe Dam Community Working Group.

Additionally, CRM actions uncovered livelihood options specifically for women, including informal trade opportunities, selling handmade goods like jewelry, and selling agricultural produce and bread at market.^{42,43}

Female EKISIL beneficiaries discussed how new trade opportunities, resource sharing agreements, and improved relations between communities have reduced compounding stressors of conflict, lower income, and food shortages.⁴⁴

Summary

USAID EKISIL demonstrates that CRM is fundamental to the design of activities that successfully build beneficiaries’ resilience and self-reliance. CRM’s value to USAID’s entire portfolio is also a valuable EKISIL takeaway, said USAID’s Robert Bagyenda.

“Many times, the expectation is that CRM best applies to certain sectors where there appears to be a more direct relationship with climate risk,” Mr. Bagyenda said. “[I]t’s evident how prolonged drought affects crop production to impact sectors like agriculture or health. With EKISIL, we learned that climate risks have implications for USAID activities in sectors that don’t always come to mind, like democracy, human rights, and governance. It is a great lesson

⁴² USAID EKISIL Activity. Personal communication with EKISIL Activity beneficiaries.

⁴³ USAID EKISIL Activity. Personal communication with EKISIL Activity staff.

⁴⁴ USAID EKISIL Activity. Personal communication with EKISIL Activity beneficiaries.

that we should not ignore climate risks across sectors, including those where the implications may not be as clear at the outset.”

Bagyenda said CRM benefits have become clearer as actions to protect investments and increase access to natural resources advance conflict reduction, agricultural productivity, and livestock health. These results have prompted knowledge sharing about CRM across USAID sector teams.

“The experience of modifying this activity to address linkages between climate and conflict played a large role in the development of our larger climate and conflict approach,” said Emma Whitaker, Mercy Corps Peace and Conflict Technical Support Unit Advisor.

As USAID EKISIL progresses, the project team is focused on sustaining outcomes by securing additional financial resources and widening institutional support for natural resources management and sharing models.

“EKISIL has supported us to go to places we have never been and to bridge networks,” said Mr. Angello Asoka, a Member of the USAID EKISIL-led Trauma Healing Group based in Moroto-Nadunget Sub County. “[T]here is a great peace now, people are calm, livestock has multiplied.”

For more information about USAID EKISIL

- [Uganda | U.S. Agency for International Development](#)
- USAID Uganda Environment and Natural Resources Management Project Management Specialist Robert Bagyenda
- USAID Uganda Conflict Prevention and Reconciliation Advisor SAFE Program Samson Barigye
- USAID Uganda Project Management Specialist (Democracy, Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights) Office of Democracy, Rights and Governance Morris Nsamba
- Mercy Corps USAID’s EKISIL Activity Chief of Party Mark Guti
- Mercy Corps Peace and Conflict Technical Support Unit Advisor Emma Whitaker

For more information about CRM

- Geoffrey Blate, Ph.D., Environment Officer, Climate and Cross-Sectoral Strategies, USAID/DDI Environment, Energy, and Infrastructure Bureau, gblate@usaid.gov

The [Climate Integration Support Facility \(CISF\)](#) blanket purchase agreement supports USAID to conduct climate risk management across all USAID programming. [Climate risk management](#) is the process of assessing, addressing, and adaptively managing climate risks that may impact the ability of USAID programs to achieve development objectives. This worldwide support mechanism can assist USAID missions, bureaus, and offices with climate risk management by providing analysis, facilitation, training, evaluation, learning opportunities, and related services. The agreement may also support focused adaptation, clean energy, and sustainable landscapes programming with such services.

Case study authors

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