NAMIBIA

PAVING A RISK-INFORMED PATHWAY TOWARDS PROSPERITY

NAMIBIA'S DISASTER RISK CHALLENGE

Although Namibia is an upper middle-income developing country with a solid economic and human capital, it is not immune to climate and disaster risk. Food and nutrition insecurity is linked to poverty that is compounded by recurrent natural hazards that affect people's livelihoods, and which severely limit the capacity of households to cope with shocks and other risks. Namibia is struggling with water shortages due to drought and limited water reserves.

In March 2016, Namibia declared a state of emergency for the biggest drought in 35 years. The El Nino induced drought of 2015-2016 affected 30% of Namibia's population, weakening the coping capacity of local communities and affecting the country's economic performance. In 2017, Namibia has received rains associated with the La Niña phenomenon, causing widespread flooding in the northern provinces and associated disease outbreaks.

The cumulative impact of the El Nino and La Nina phenomena propelled the government to reassess its prevention and preparedness capacities and created a momentum for accelerated reform.

H.Ellis / UNICEF 2008

UN SCALING UP PREPAREDNESS AND PREVENTION ACTIONS

The challenges faced during the drought response operations, as well as the findings of the capacity assessment have highlighted the need for a more coordinated engagement of the UN System on DRM issues. The CADRI-supported recommendations have informed the development of the new UN Partnership Assistance Framework (2018-2023), which includes several DRM indicators. A UN Joint Programme was initiated in support of preparedness and response capacity development activities, risk information for early warning, financing, and strengthening safety nets.
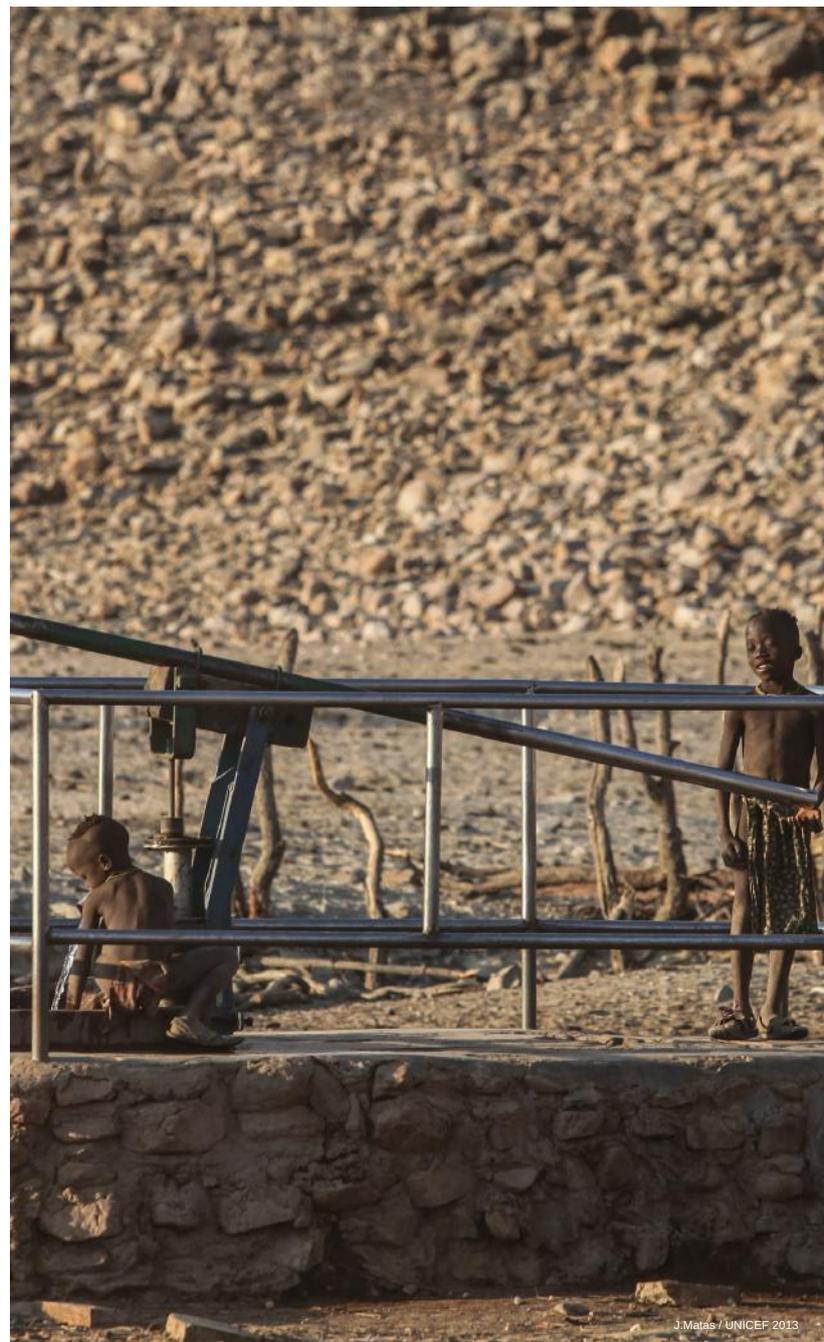
BUILDING RESILIENT LIVELIHOODS & RESILIENT ECONOMY

Namibia's National Development Plan foresees that by 2022, 88% of Namibians will have access to adequate food year-round, and that agricultural production will be increased by at least 50%. Agriculture provides livelihoods to over 70% of the population. Reducing risks and building resilience in key sectors such as agriculture, environment and water, as well as health and education, is therefore, of paramount importance to protect livelihoods from future shocks.

Cognizant of its climate and disaster risk to national development, the Government established institutional structures and developed legal and policy instruments. The challenges faced during the drought response phase motivated the government to mobilize the CADRI Partnership services to facilitate an assessment of the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) system.

Based on the prioritized recommendations from the capacity assessment facilitated by CADRI and UNDAC endorsed in February 2017, the Government developed the new National DRM Framework and Action Plan (2017- 2021) with sectoral components such as agriculture, health, and education. At the institutional level, the central-regional coordination mechanism for disaster preparedness was significantly strengthened through the design of national and local multi-hazard contingency and response plans.

A national multi-hazard risk information system is under development under the Office of the Prime Minister by regrouping data sets from various sectors that can be used for early warning and preparedness.

J.Matas / UNICEF 2013

The CaDRi Partnership
Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative