REPUBLIC OF KENYA

BARINGO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

THE CAUX DIALOGUE ON LAND AND SECURITY

A PERSPECTIVE OF LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS AND ACTIONS IN ADDRESSING CONCERNS OF LAND DEGRADATION AND CONFLICT IN BARINGO COUNTY, KENYA

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY GOVERNOR; BARINGO COUNTY
Background and Context

LOCATION

Baringo County located in Northern Kenya lies within longitude 35° 30’ and 36° 30’ East and latitude 0° 10’ South and 1° 40’ North. It covers an estimated area of 11,015.3 km² of which 165 km² is covered by surface water (Lakes Bogoria, Baringo and Kamnarok). The county comprises six Sub-counties; East Pokot, Baringo North, Baringo Central, Marigat, Mogotio and Eldama Ravine.
The Sub-Counties of Baringo

• Baringo Central
• Baringo South
• Baringo North
• Eldama Ravine
• Tiaty
• Mogotio
The county is categorized into two agro climatic zones; semi humid to humid areas which covers 21% and semi-arid/semi humid to very arid covering 79%. Much of the vegetation is dense bush covering an area of 54.3%. Forest cover area in the county is at 620 sq. km.

The Arid and Semi-Arid areas are vulnerable to acute human suffering and loss of development assets brought about by disasters which are caused by both natural and human induced hazards, and frequently by a combination of both. The hazards include environmental degradation, floods, Land degradation, landslides, conflicts (natural resource based and human -wildlife), human, livestock and crop diseases.
Overview of Land use in Baringo County

The Agro-Ecological zones give rise to different land use patterns. This consist a tropical zone with well-drained fertile soils suitable for various land use systems in the highlands; and a semi-arid zone with complex soils of various textures and drainage conditions, consisting of rangeland with livestock production as the main economic activity in the lowlands. This potentially arable land mass of 4,956.9 km² is dominated by subsistence agriculture with cropland occupying 15%, grazing land 30%, and forests 13% (65280.4 ha). The rest of the land is used for game parks, urban centres, markets, homesteads and infrastructure.
Land Degradation

Land degradation and erosion is widespread in most parts of Baringo County. In fact, several areas are rendered unfit for development activities since they are lined up with deep gullies. Indiscriminate clearance of vegetation cover, non-protection of water catchment areas, overstocking, overgrazing and poor farming are the direct anthropogenic factors leading to degradation. Erratic rainfall and high-intensity storms cause heavy runoff and flash flooding. Erosion, exacerbated by deforestation in the foothills, is silting up Lake Baringo, the only large source of fresh water in the area.

Land degradation is a major factor in the displacement.
Land Degraded Areas

Deep linear gully along Ainomoi-keturwo road near Kakwane and the denuded lands of Eron area
The Conflict Context

Baringo has been the setting of numerous conflicts. The conflicts are as a result of several intertwined and intricate factors. Mutsotso (2013) notes that by boarding eight counties in total, out of which, four of them are home to pastoralists’ communities that are perennially involved in conflict; Baringo County is rendered more vulnerable. Tiaty is the most affected sub-county as it borders Elgeyo-Marakwet, West Pokot, Turkana and Samburu.
Drivers of Conflict in Baringo County;

The scarcity of water and concentration of people and livestock in the available water points has often led to conflict between the different communities over the rights of use of the water source.

- Pastureland/conflicts over grazing rights
- Population pressure has led to environmental conflicts and competition for land by different land uses, i.e. pastoralism, sedentary agriculture, tree harvesting and conservation.
- Climate variability and change bring the risk of serious negative impacts on environmental and human systems, including extreme events such as drought, Heat Waves, Floods, Storms and slower onset impacts such as changing rainfall patterns, increased salinization, decreased soil fertility, and others.
Climate change, on its own, does not directly displace people or cause them to move but it produces environmental effects and exacerbates current vulnerabilities that make it difficult for people to survive where they live. The changes, in turn, are likely to result in population movements and conflicts due to pressure on scarce resources. Climate change and resulting resource scarcity may be one of the driving forces behind the escalation of inter-ethnic conflict. This escalates during periods of drought.

The recent El Niño phenomenon and flooding could an example of the impact of climate change in the county. The impact can be clearly seen as shown in pictures.
Recent El Nino and Flooding in Marigat and its Impacts

Figure: A view of Perkerra River after the rainstorm as on Sunday, 8th May 2016

Figure: A view of mud deposits at Block II after river Perkerra diverted its course
Recent El Nino and Flooding in Marigat and its Impacts

Figure: A view of one of the cattle shed where livestock in Ng’ambo were swept away.

Figure: A view of aftermaths of floods showing deeply eroded farmland in Endao
Marigat town and its environs in Baringo South Sub County, was hit by heavy down pour which caused flashfloods on 6th May 2016, the torrential rains started pounding the area from 6pm evening and continued till 11pm, this was experienced in almost many parts of Baringo County especially Marigat upstream areas around Tugen hills. According to area residents it was a rain of its kind, which had happened in 10 years ago. Raging water from upper region plus run off water swept through the town and flooded the whole of lower Marigat division (IL Chamus and Perkerra Ward), causing havoc and displacing many.

A total of 1,327 HH and 5,000 people were affected. Two people were confirmed dead and one person reported missing, rescue missions are ongoing. Livelihoods of many have been disrupted and school going children will not be able to attend classes as their schools remain flooded and closed especially for labos and loropil primary schools, Properties of unknown value were lost including two acre tomato farm.
Current land restoration activities contributing to Conflict resolution in the County:

- Building of dykes, dams, water pans and de-silting of old dams
- Support in the provision of seeds and fertilizer for planting
- Support in food relief, water and livestock feeds
- Livestock off-take during severe drought
- Provision of medicine and vaccination to prevent disease outbreaks and
- Evacuation to safer grounds in case of floods
- Tree planting campaigns (3 million seedlings earmarked for planting this season)
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✓ Promotion of soil conservation measures in the farms
✓ Reseeding of denuded lands
✓ Promotion of water harvesting techniques
✓ Promotion of early land preparation and timely planting of crops
✓ Initiation of projects that bring the conflicting communities to work together e.g. Lendorok Irrigation project in Mukutani which has resulted into 2 warring communities work together harmoniously
✓ Exploration of Geothermal Energy
Conclusion/Recommendations:

✓ Strengthening of community peace committees to conduct Peace Building Initiatives in faith based organizations in building peace between communities

✓ Develop County framework for benefit sharing from the utilization of natural resources

✓ Through collaboration with partners and key stakeholders strengthen initiatives aimed at providing effective and innovative sustainable natural resources management practices and climate change adaptation and mitigation measures
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✓ Promote the development of alternative livelihoods to ease pressure on already strained resource through working with partners

✓ Promote awareness on soil and water conservation practices

✓ Seek to strengthen linkages with institutions involved in peace building and conflict resolution initiatives more adaptive to local environmental, social, economic and cultural conditions
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION