

# Mitigating Food Security and Mental Health Crises in Karamoja

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## **Group 1 - Annex 2: Drills and Exercises**

We offer two distinct and important Training Exercises to mitigate the effects of drought and food insecurity as well as mental health outcomes due to disaster risk exposures.

### 1. Famine Preparedness : Food Insecurity Early Warning System Exercises

Scenario: A severe drought has struck a country in East Africa, leading to crop failures and widespread food insecurity. As a participant in this exercise, you are a member of a local and/or government task force responsible for responding to the crisis. Your task force has access to the The Food Security Climate Resilience Facility (FSCRF) data and information, and you must develop a response plan to mitigate the impact of the drought.

Scenario Planning Exercises: Participants are presented with hypothetical scenarios related to climate-related risks to food security and are asked to develop response plans based on the information provided. This scenario planning exercise is designed to help participants understand the complex and multi-faceted nature of responding to food security emergencies. By working through this exercise, participants can develop the skills and knowledge needed to use the FSCRF effectively and to respond quickly and effectively to emerging food security risks.

A Focus Group Discussion undertaken by the Karamoja Resiliency Report found that Elders “...stated clearly that they had forecast severe hunger outcomes in 2020, 2021, and 2022 as they witnessed first-hand the impacts of multiple hazards on their livestock and crops. Importantly too, elders in all the focus groups forecast severe levels of hunger in the 2023 lean season” it is essential that Elders be at the table in these exercises.<sup>1</sup>

*(see Table 1 below)*

## 2. Psychological First Aid for Disaster Responders and Survivors

Many disaster responders including medical workers, humanitarian aid providers, local and governmental officers, and the military are also affected by the disasters they respond to. Many are also community members. Understanding how extreme stress/distress and/or trauma affect the nervous system is essential in destigmatizing mental health. Utilizing mindfulness based stress reduction strategies can help mitigate the effects of trauma for both physical and mental health outcomes and can be shared across platforms. This training will allow first and second responders to utilize strategies for themselves and the communities they serve.

*(see Table 2 below)*

## Table 1. Food Security Early Warning Exercises

<b>Background &amp; Objectives</b>	<p>The Food Security Climate Resilience Facility (FSCRF) is an early warning system developed by the World Food Programme (WFP) to monitor climate-related risks to food security in vulnerable countries. The FSCRF uses climate data, satellite imagery, and other information to identify areas at risk of droughts, floods, and other extreme weather events that could lead to food insecurity.</p> <p>Conduct Early Warning System Exercises that help communities detect and respond to potential food shortages before they occur.</p>
<b>Estimate Length of Training</b>	<p>2 Days</p>
<b>Target Audience and max size of audience.</b>	<p>District Level Government and Local Stakeholders including Tribal Chiefs, Village Heads, Elders, Health Officials &amp; Aid Organizations 50 attendees</p>
<b>Facilitator(s)</b>	<p>Local District Health Officer (Karamojong). It is necessary for a local Karamojong to conduct the training as her/his knowledge of the land, changing climate, language and cultural acceptability affect the implementation science outcomes of the mitigation.</p>
<b>What do you want community members to do or learn as a result of their attending this session?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review the FSCRF data and information related to the drought. Analyze the data to identify the areas of the District that are most affected by the drought and the populations that are most at risk of food insecurity.</li> <li>2. Identify the immediate needs of the affected populations, including food, water, and healthcare. Develop a plan for providing these essential services, taking into account the logistical challenges of delivering aid to remote and hard-to-reach areas.</li> <li>3. Develop a longer-term plan for addressing the underlying causes of food insecurity, including improving agricultural practices and building resilience to future droughts. Consider how the government can work with NGOs, international organizations, and local communities to implement these interventions.</li> <li>4. Consider the potential risks and challenges associated with the response plan, including security risks, political challenges, and resource constraints. Develop contingency plans to address these risks and ensure the success of the response.</li> <li>5. Present your response plan to the other task force members and receive feedback. Revise your plan as needed based on feedback received.</li> </ol>
<b>Strategies to increase community uptake of your mitigation</b>	<p>Provide transport and data costs, cash vouchers, training materials, certificates of completion, lodging and meals</p>

**Table 2. Psychological First Aid for Disaster Responders and Survivors**

<b>Objectives</b>	Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Strategies for Mental Health
<b>Estimate Length of Training</b>	2.5 Days
<b>Target Audience and Max Size</b>	District Level Government and Local Stakeholders including Tribal Chiefs, Village Heads, Health Officials, Community Health Workers & Aid Organizations  100 attendees
<b>Facilitators</b>	Two Local District Health Officers (Karamojong) trained in MBSR skills. It is necessary for local Karamojong to conduct the training as her/his knowledge of the land, changing climate, language and cultural acceptability affect the implementation science outcomes of the mitigation.
<b>What do you want community members to do or learn as a result of their attending this session?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learn how stress/distress and trauma affect the nervous system</li> <li>2. Learn trauma informed awareness</li> <li>3. Discuss mental health stigma and the effects of it on the community</li> <li>4. Practice Mindful Breathing Exercises: This exercise involves guiding participants through a series of deep breathing exercises, with an emphasis on paying attention to the breath and the sensations in the body. The purpose of the exercise is to help participants develop a sense of calm and focus by engaging the parasympathetic nervous system.</li> <li>5. Practice Body Scan Exercise: This exercise involves guiding participants through a scan of their body, paying attention to sensations and areas of tension or discomfort. The purpose of the exercise is to help participants develop awareness of their physical sensations and learn to release tension. Utilizing restorative yoga poses such as “legs on a chair” will also engage the parasympathetic nervous system</li> <li>6. Guided Imagery Exercise: This exercise involves guiding participants through a visualization exercise, such as imagining a peaceful scene or a safe place. The purpose of the exercise is to help participants develop a sense of calm and relaxation.</li> <li>7. Gratitude Exercise: This exercise involves reflecting on things for which participants are grateful, such as people or experiences that have brought them joy or support. The purpose of the exercise is to help participants develop a sense of appreciation and positive emotions.</li> <li>8. Compassion Exercise: This exercise involves guiding participants through a series of compassion practices, such as sending themselves and others positive messages or imagining giving themselves a hug. The purpose of the exercise is to help participants develop compassion and kindness towards themselves and others.</li> <li>9. Learn how to share the above practices with others</li> </ol>
<b>Strategies to increase community uptake of your mitigation</b>	Provide transport and data costs, cash vouchers, training materials, certificates of completion, lodging and meals. Offer continued support through electronic and in-person supervision.

## Reference

1. *Home*. Karamoja Resilience Support Unit. (2021, June 28). Retrieved April 7, 2023, from <https://karamojaresilience.org/>