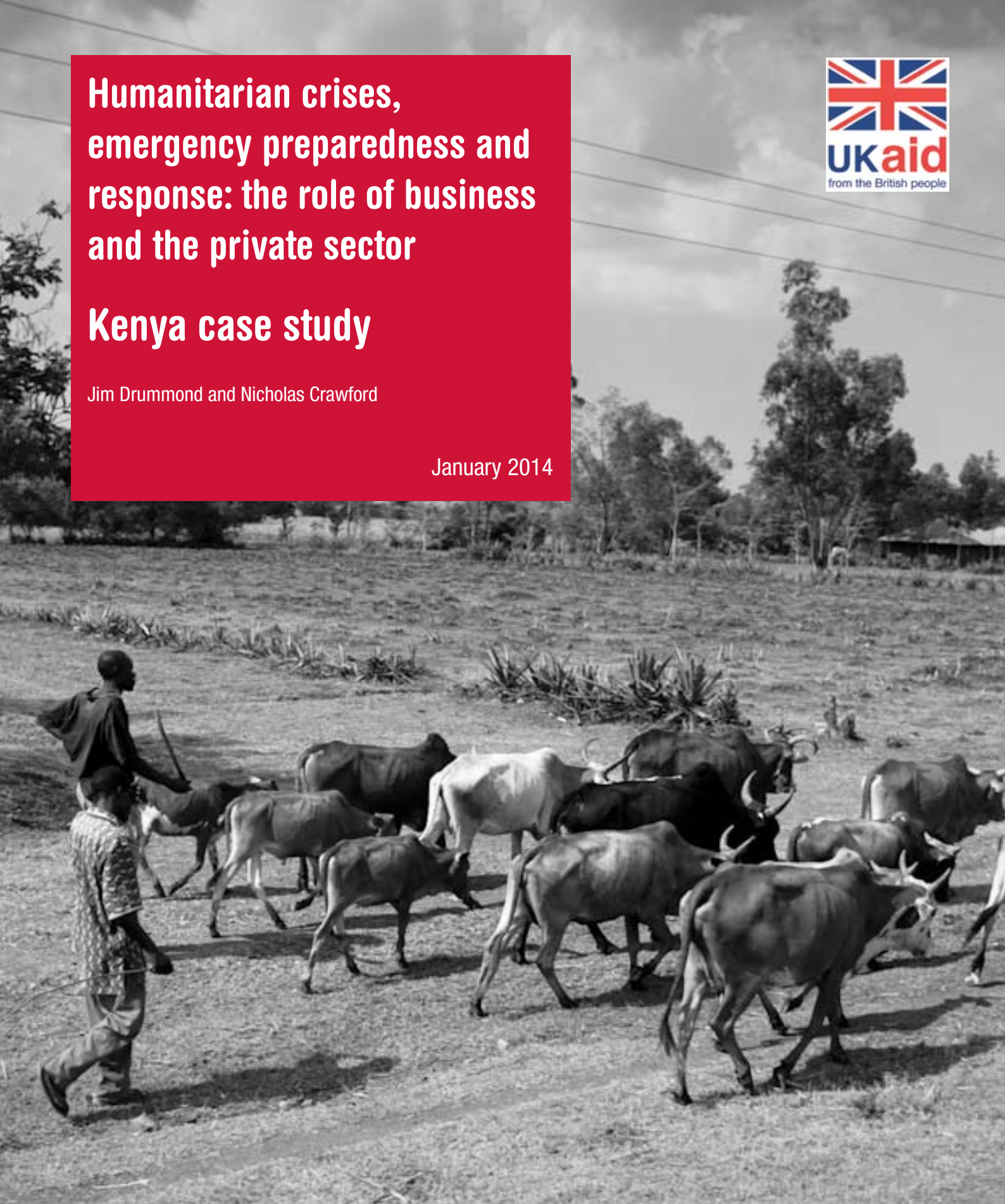


# Humanitarian crises, emergency preparedness and response: the role of business and the private sector

## Kenya case study

Jim Drummond and Nicholas Crawford

January 2014



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# Acronyms

<b>ASAL</b>	Arid and Semi-Arid Lands	<b>KCB</b>	Kenya Commercial Bank
<b>BBCMA</b>	BBC Media Action	<b>KEPSA</b>	Kenya Private Sector Alliance
<b>CSR</b>	Corporate Social Responsibility	<b>KRCS</b>	Kenya Red Cross Society
<b>DFID</b>	UK Department for International Development	<b>KSA</b>	Kenya Shippers' Association
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction	<b>MMS</b>	Mobile Money Service
<b>EAC</b>	East African Community	<b>NDMA</b>	National Disaster Management Authority
<b>EDES</b>	Ending Drought Emergencies Strategy	<b>NDOC</b>	National Disaster Operations Centre
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product	<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>GoK</b>	Government of Kenya	<b>OCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>HSNP</b>	Hunger Safety Nets Programme	<b>ODA</b>	Official Development Assistance
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced People	<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology	<b>TMEA</b>	Trademark East Africa
<b>K4K</b>	Kenya for Kenyans		
<b>KAM</b>	Kenya Association of Manufacturers		



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# Executive summary

Kenya was selected as a case study for this project on the role of the private sector in humanitarian response because it has a vibrant and innovative private sector, a history of severe and repeated humanitarian crises and a track record of public–private partnerships for humanitarian action. The study found a wide range of such partnerships and contractual relationships. These include traditional emergency response roles such as transport and food and non-food procurement; financial transfer systems, including through innovative e-money transfers via mobile phones or village banking agents; efforts to keep markets functioning during droughts, including destocking before animals lose their value and paying out on insurance previously bought by pastoralists; and ground-breaking corporate collaboration and fundraising in support of the Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS).

## Opportunities and constraints

Although humanitarian interventions in Kenya have been dominated by ‘classic’ relief operations (e.g. food aid), there is a move towards more market-sensitive options that will broaden the base of private sector engagement. The most exciting developments, from a humanitarian perspective, are within the rapidly growing sectors of finance and telecommunications. Partnerships have been developed with Kenyan mobile phone companies and banks to facilitate cash transfers: their rapid growth is directly touching crisis-affected populations in Kenya. Many Kenyan mobile operators and banks have business models committed to reaching the poorest, crisis-prone areas of the country.

During the 2011 drought response interventions were mostly pilots and represented a relatively small proportion of overall transfers, and insufficient mobile phone coverage and inadequate rural markets continue to slow the spread of these partnerships. There are also questions about how sustainable some of them will be if profits for the private sector – independent of aid contracts – do not follow. Nevertheless, the switch to cash for drought response and the new partnerships forged with banks and telecoms companies represent a radical departure from the food aid-based emergency

response practice in Kenya. The possibilities for other humanitarian (or humanitarian-related) products, such as crop and livestock insurance, health services and improved market information, have only just begun to be explored. Another area ripe for increased humanitarian–private sector partnership is in the commercialisation of the livestock sector in Kenya’s arid lands, as envisaged in Kenya’s Ending Drought Emergencies Strategy (EDES). At a practical level there are now issues for the government, donors and the private sector to resolve around which initiatives should be taken to scale quickly, the pace of change from food to cash, and the need for donor subsidies to promote new partnerships.

The private sector has limited confidence in government to deliver in humanitarian crises. It has respect for but no detailed knowledge of how the international humanitarian system works. Kenya has a well-developed set of business associations, which currently engage mostly on humanitarian issues such as political violence that impact them directly. But they could become a valuable channel for widening the private sector engagement in other humanitarian crises. The EDES and the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Strategic Plan envisage engaging the private sector. This will work best if government and donors can articulate a compelling, business-motivating case for reducing humanitarian crises – a case that would explain bottom line benefits from investments in the arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) and using market mechanisms to respond to droughts. This will be a long-term project but one that recent developments in banking, mobile telephony, transport and mining suggest is a high priority.

There is a growing awareness of humanitarian issues amongst the Kenyan population and Kenyan firms, which increasingly match donations made by their staff. The Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) annual fund raising gala is the place for senior business executives to be seen. This is part of an encouraging trend towards wider corporate social responsibility. Several of the larger firms, such as Safaricom and Equity Bank, have set up their own foundations, though mostly for small-scale, longer-term development work. The government

and donors should encourage the public and private media to give out humanitarian information to educate citizens further about roles and responsibilities in humanitarian crises in order to enhance accountability and encourage further giving.

KRCS is widely accepted as the first responder for small and medium-scale humanitarian crises, and partnered with mobile phone companies and other national and international firms to raise money for both the drought response and in the aftermath of the Westgate mall attack in Nairobi in September 2013. KRCS' business model includes raising funds from property including hotels, and its ambulance fleet is managed by its private sector arm.

When asked by the study team, most private sector actors (as well as many UN, NGO and government officials) equated partnership on humanitarian action with fundraising, suggesting a quite straightforward interpretation of private sector engagement with humanitarian action as opposed to the more nuanced discussions on private-public partnerships in the international humanitarian world.

Looking ahead, if Kenya is to cut dependence on food assistance and reduce and manage its own humanitarian crises, a number of changes are needed, including a more prominent role for the private sector in preparedness and response. Taking greater national responsibility for humanitarian challenges will require a capacity to raise more resources domestically or through borrowing internationally; an improved transport system that allows the private sector to deliver relief items rapidly; more integrated and resilient markets in drought-prone areas; a capacity to transfer cash to crisis-affected people so that they can make use of those markets; a middle class educated on humanitarian issues and willing to contribute and hold their government to account; and a government that plans with the private and NGO sectors, taking advice on international best practice. Some of these points feature in the EDES. Overall, Kenya is making good progress in some areas, but there are uncertainties in others, particularly over the role of the government.

If Kenya is to take greater responsibility for managing larger humanitarian crises, it will be crucial to encourage markets to function during droughts and to explore new ways to transfer resources to people made vulnerable by crises. Donors are supporting a wide range of experiments in these areas, and these should continue, coordinated by the government in close cooperation with the private sector and international donors. Technology changes mean that firms like Safaricom are making commercial decisions to invest in previously unprofitable areas. With the spread of private sector-facilitated cash transfer mechanisms to Kenya's arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs), the need for food and non-food inputs from aid agencies should decline. More broadly, significant new investment in the ASALs (e.g. by foreign oil companies), and new water and transport links) means that humanitarian actors will need to engage large private sector investors to sensitise them to humanitarian issues and build the relationships that will be needed in a crisis. Large agencies such as the World Food Programme should engage more closely with transport planners to ensure that their concerns are taken into account as new infrastructure is planned. As transport efficiency improves there will be more opportunities for the purchase of humanitarian supplies in the region. This merits separate study.

Persuading businesses to engage with the humanitarian community will require a convincing case that participation in preparedness and response will improve their profits. This study suggests that the elements of such a case are there. The international humanitarian community will be able to bring best practice from other countries and the KRCS has the local standing with the private sector and the Kenyan public to help the government and the business associations in this task. Staff in the field should be consulted on what partnerships will work best for them, and be given a clear steer on how best to take advantage of existing UN headquarters partnerships. While there are many opportunities for linking up aid agencies and the business community in Kenya, the time and resources needed to build partnerships in the field should not be underestimated.



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# 1 Introduction

This paper explores the role of the private sector in humanitarian action in Kenya. Kenya was selected as a case study because it has a vibrant and innovative private sector, a history of severe and repeated humanitarian crises, notably drought in the country's arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs), and a track record of public–private partnerships for humanitarian action that have exploited new technologies and experimented with new models of fundraising. The study explores the private sector's current and potential roles in emergency preparedness and response; analyses the perceived benefits and negative impacts of private sector activity in support of people affected by crisis; identifies frameworks, structures and mechanisms through which the private sector supports emergency preparedness and response, and how these might be enhanced for better future collaboration; and investigates how humanitarian–private sector partnerships can best stimulate economic growth in Kenya, while also protecting humanitarian outcomes.

This study is part of a broader project on 'Humanitarian Crises, Emergency Preparedness and Response: The Roles of Business and the Private Sector', financed by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) with the close involvement of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The project is jointly implemented by the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) at the Overseas Development Institute, the Humanitarian Futures Programme (HFP) at King's College London and Vantage Partners, a global consulting firm headquartered in the United States. It is overseen by Dr Sara Pantuliano (HPG) and Dr Randolph Kent (HFP). The project addresses issues such as how humanitarian assistance and private sector business activity affect each other, where potential opportunities and synergies can be achieved and negative interactions avoided and how relevant actors can learn from past experience to develop or enhance frameworks and mechanisms that governmental, multilateral and private sector actors can jointly subscribe to and implement in order to better respond to crises and reduce the vulnerability of crisis-affected people. Building on country studies in Jordan, Kenya and Indonesia, and a strategy and options analysis of Haiti, the overarching analysis considers what the private

sector could potentially contribute to humanitarian action, including its role as an actor in its own right and through collaboration with humanitarian actors.

Looking at trends and transformations in the humanitarian context, analysis by Kings College/HFP suggests that the established systems of humanitarian action – whereby a handful of (mostly Western) donors and aid agencies monopolise information and action, sometimes at the expense of national involvement – are changing. A number of factors are contributing to this change, including the increasing ability and willingness of host governments to assert control over aid delivery on their territory, the increasing number, scale and intensity of crises relative to donor resources and the convergence of humanitarian and development investments in disaster risk reduction and resilience-building (Kent and Burke, 2011). At the same time, the mushrooming of low-cost technologies across crisis-affected areas – most obviously mobile phones – is creating relationships between long-marginalised communities and the private sector (and between potential 'beneficiaries' and their governments) that never existed before. While the pressure of these changes is eroding the monopoly of the traditional 'system', it is also opening up enormous possibilities for partnering with new actors, including the private sector, and enabling the use of new technologies to deliver assistance. This process is, however, just beginning.

## 1.1 Outline and methodology

Following this introduction, the paper provides an overview of the private sector's role in recent emergency preparedness and response, notably the 2011 drought and political violence related to elections. The analysis draws from these experiences to explore opportunities and constraints for future humanitarian–private sector engagement. The final sections look at future prospects and propose some modest recommendations.

The study team was guided by the overall project's guiding questions, which seek to understand (i) how humanitarian assistance and private sector

business activity affect each other, where potential opportunities and synergies can be achieved and negative interactions avoided and how governments, multilateral organisations and civil society can stimulate the private sector to more effectively engage in preparedness and response and contribute to resilience outcomes, now and in the future; and (ii) how to use learning from past experience to develop or enhance frameworks and mechanisms that governmental, multilateral and private sector actors can jointly subscribe to and implement in order to reduce people's vulnerability to shocks and crises, with the ultimate aim of improving the effectiveness of emergency preparedness and response efforts.

The study team began with a pre-mission desk review of existing documentation (annual reports, studies, programme reviews, evaluations, etc.) on global thinking about humanitarian–private sector partnerships, humanitarian action in Kenya beginning with post-election violence in 2008, trends in the Kenyan economy and the structure of the private sector in Kenya, and the role of the private sector in humanitarian action in Kenya. During its 14-day country visit, the team undertook discussions and interviews with a broad range of actors (see Annex 1 for a complete list), including local and national authorities, donor governments, private sector companies and foundations, local and national private sector business associations and local and international humanitarian and development agencies and actors. The team tried to meet as wide a range of stakeholders as possible. Discussions were in the form of focus group and one-to-one interviews/consultations, each guided by a set of standard questions adapted according to the type of actor being interviewed. Although the team's time was concentrated in Nairobi, each team member also spent two days conducting interviews and gathering information in separate drought-prone areas of Kenya: Isiolo (Isiolo County) and Lodwar (Turkana County), respectively.

Limited time did not permit in-depth field visits, which would have allowed for discussions with disaster-affected people. Furthermore, the private sector in Kenya, as everywhere, is sprawling in scope and geography, and many actors have a direct or indirect impact on humanitarian action, from ports and cereals traders in Mombasa to livestock herders in Garissa and kiosk owners in Daadab. Rather than trying to capture all of this complexity, the research

team concentrated its interviews and analysis on those parts of the private sector that past studies and key stakeholders identified as having significant, or potentially significant, engagement with humanitarian actors and with humanitarian challenges in Kenya.

## 1.2 Contextual overview: the economy, governance and the humanitarian context

Kenya has a market economy and foreign private investment is encouraged. The private sector accounts for 80% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) and more than half of wage employment, although the informal sector contributes 75% of employment. Tea, tourism and horticulture are the leading foreign exchange earners, but Kenya's international reputation is increasingly built on information technology (IT) and finance. The World Bank calls M-PESA 'the most developed and successful mobile money payment system in the world', up from 19,071 subscribers in 2007 to over 15m in 2012. The new East African Submarine Cable system reduced international bandwidth prices by 90%. Within Africa Kenya is second to South Africa in innovation and finance in the 2013 'Doing Business Survey', and Nairobi is a regional hub for multinationals. Kenya is the third most popular destination for private equity in Africa and has a strong network of business associations led by the Kenya Private Sector Association (KEPSA) (IFC/World Bank, 2013; Deloitte, 2012). However, business growth is constrained by corruption and a weak regulatory environment.

The Kenyan government's Vision 2030 strategy, launched after national consultations in 2008, envisages reaching middle-income status, helped by a growth rate of 10% per annum from 2012 and a modernised economy with higher domestic savings, foreign direct investment and aid (GoK, 2008). Priority will be given to improving transport, adding value to agricultural produce, modernising the financial sector and making Kenya a centre for IT. The Vision is implemented through medium-term plans, the second running from 2013–17 and including a strategy to end drought emergencies. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (World Bank 2012b) expect Kenya's economy to grow by about 6% in 2013 and that it could sustain that level, making it a leader amongst

East African economies. Inflation and the currency have stabilised after the effects of the 2011 drought. GDP per capita was \$850 in 2012. In 2011 Official Development Assistance (ODA) was 7.3% of GDP; humanitarian assistance accounted for 16% of ODA.

Kenya's place on the northern transport corridor, particularly Mombasa port, means that the functioning of its transport infrastructure is critical to trade and the delivery of humanitarian supplies across the region. Transit times are improving but are still well short of international best practice. Dwell times at Mombasa port fell from 24 days in 2011 to five days in 2012 (SCEA, 2013). Ninety-six per cent of freight leaves the port by road. A deal has been signed with China to build a new rail line to the Ugandan border. In 2010 it took 48 hours by lorry to transport animals the 730km to Nairobi from Moyale at a cost of \$723 for one lorry-load of 18 cattle (Pavanello, 2010). Work is now well under way to tarmac the road from Isiolo to Moyale, completing the link to Ethiopia. Efforts are being made to reduce non-tariff barriers within East Africa under the auspices of the East African Community.

Kenya restricts maize imports meaning that domestic prices are often substantially higher than world market prices in times of drought, although duties were temporarily suspended during the recent drought. Currently only 5% of Africa's grain imports come from Africa, suggesting scope to meet shortfalls within the region if transport is improved.

### 1.2.1 Politics and governance

Kenya is listed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as a fragile state. The country has also seen serious political violence, notably around elections in 2007, when some 1,200 people were killed and 664,000 displaced. A new Constitution was approved in a referendum in 2010 aimed at separating powers, with an executive Presidency, a House of Representatives and a Senate. Regional and local government is focused on 47 new counties, each with an elected Governor and Assembly. Article 43 of the Constitution guarantees the right of all Kenyans to be free from hunger. Elections under the new constitution passed relatively peacefully in March 2013, but the President and Vice-President are now being tried by the International Criminal Court for their alleged role in violence after the 2007 election. The new government has reduced the number of ministries from 42 to 18 and is considering reducing the number of parastatals.

Kenya's new constitution provided for the introduction of county government immediately after the election. The counties absorb the municipal, district and provincial authorities (World Bank, 2012a). Their responsibilities include agriculture, health, trade and development and disaster management. Counties can raise some of their own revenue and will receive revenue from the centre according to a weighted formula including population and poverty. This is an ambitious devolution plan being implemented very rapidly. There are some private sector concerns that local revenue raising will deter business.

Kenya's population was about 9m at independence and, according to UN estimates, could reach 96m by 2050 (UNDESA, 2010). It is currently 42m and growing by 1m per year. There are 10m primary school age children. The UN also estimates that half of Kenyans will live in urban areas by 2050. The Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey for 2005/6 (GoK, 2005) shows urban poverty falling to 34% from 49% in 1997, but there are large disparities between North Province (74%) and Central (30%). More than half of households in the arid lands receive some form of transfer, including remittances.

### 1.2.2 Humanitarian crises

Kenya is highly susceptible to natural disasters, particularly drought in the arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs), which make up about 70% of the country's territory. The most recent drought, which struck northern and parts of eastern Kenya in 2011, affected 3.7m people. Since the drought, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has gradually wound down its Kenya country office, and most other humanitarian agencies are winding down or focusing on resilience work.

**Table 1: People affected by natural disasters**

Disaster	Date	Affected
Drought	1991	2,700,000
Epidemic	1994	6,500,000
Drought	1994	1,200,000
Drought	1997	1,600,000
Flood	1997	900,000
Drought	1999	23,000,000
Drought	2004	2,300,000
Drought	2005	3,500,000
Flood	2006	723,000
Drought	2008	3,800,000
Drought	2011	3,700,000

Source: PreventionWeb, 2013.

Following the 2008–2011 droughts the government has reshaped its policy and strategy for the northern areas and other arid lands, focusing on integrating them politically and economically with the rest of Kenya. The aim is to shift the emphasis from drought response, which often arrived late and focused on food aid, to resilience, preparedness and the use of new technology. The new policies and strategies are set out in the National Policy for the Sustainable Development of Northern Kenya and other Arid Lands and the Drought Risk Management and Ending Drought Emergencies Strategy for 2013–17, part of Kenya’s Medium Term Plan. These speak of the public sector enabling the private sector through investment in infrastructure and education and providing incentives for investors. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), formed in 2011 and now reporting to the Ministry of Planning and Devolution, has a leading role in implementation.

An ASAL Stakeholder Forum including the private sector has also been established. Uncertainty remains over the impact of devolution on humanitarian crises and the setting up and budgetary provision for the new National Drought Contingency Fund.

The second recent form of humanitarian emergency involves political violence and terrorism. Post-election violence in 2007/8 killed about 1,200 people and displaced 664,000; another 192 are reported to have died during the 2013 elections. The Westgate attack in September 2013, the first large-scale terrorist attack on a Kenyan establishment, left 67 people dead and 175 injured. Kenya is also home to a large Somali refugee population as a result of conflict, insecurity, terrorism and drought in Somalia; the combination of these factors led the number of Somali refugees in Kenya to rise rapidly to over half a million.

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# 2 The role of the private sector in humanitarian action

Kenya's private sector is growing steadily. However, while sectors that traditionally might serve emergency response and preparedness – such as road and port infrastructure, transport and food and non-food suppliers – continue to show steady progress, it is the new economy sectors centred around financial institutions and telecommunications (including social media) whose rapid growth is directly touching crisis-affected populations in Kenya. From an emergency perspective, what distinguishes the boom-like atmosphere evident in the Nairobi headquarters of the mobile operators and banks is these companies' insistence – motivated partly by business and partly by corporate social responsibility – on their commitment to reaching the poorest and most marginal areas of the country and, in particular, the drought-prone arid and semi-lands.

For the most part, formal private sector engagement with the machinery of humanitarian preparedness and response at the national level has been minimal. Interviews with a number of business associations in Nairobi as well as a review of the various government-led and UN-supported coordination structures revealed that the private sector is not generally represented. For their part, business associations noted that they were not invited to play a role in government-led emergency response and planning. Instead, in instances when the business community does become directly involved with the government – for example following the post-election violence in 2007–2008 and after the Westgate attack – they interpret their role not as a partner, but rather as a reluctant substitute for ineffectual government action.

At the local level, formal private sector involvement with government-led emergency coordination mechanisms has likewise been minimal. Government officials noted that the role and composition of the new County and Sub-County Steering Committees (successors to the former District Steering Committees), charged with disaster preparedness and response, is still being debated. Officials in Lodwar were especially keen to include local transporters in county planning and coordination mechanisms in order to pre-empt the

contract disputes that created major problems during the 2011 drought response. The picture is similar in Isiolo, where the County Disaster Management Committee has not yet been formed and the local NDMA is only receiving funds for salaries. Under the previous arrangements predating the 2010 Constitution the District Disaster Management Committee included the local chair of the Isiolo Chamber of Commerce.

A major exception to the private sector's exclusion from humanitarian preparedness and response structures – and its reluctance to take a lead where it feels government should be leading – is in the area of fundraising for the KRCS, where the Kenyans for Kenya (K4K) initiative is the prime example (see Box 1, next page).

## 2.1 The private sector and the emergency response to the 2011 drought

The 2011 drought affected more than 3.7m people in Kenya and brought emergency conditions to seven counties in northern and eastern Kenya: Turkana, Mandera, Marsabit, Garissa, Wajir, Isiolo and Tana River. While the area of the affected regions is proportionally large (58% of Kenya's total territory), the total population of these regions is relatively small (3.8m, or approximately 10% of Kenya's population) and their contribution to Kenya's economy, at about 5% of overall economic activity, is even smaller (World Bank, 2011). In the arid districts, mobile pastoralism dominates the economy; the semi-arid areas have a mix of rain-fed and irrigated agriculture, agro-pastoralism, bio-enterprise and conservation or tourism-related activities (Fitzgibbon, 2012). The private sector's stake in the drought-affected regions is, from a national economic point of view, relatively small, at least for now. This was reflected in the study team's interviews and focus group discussions in Lodwar (Turkana County) and Isiolo (Isiolo County), where the 2011

drought response was described almost exclusively as a traditional public sector (government, UN and international and national NGO) response, mainly involving distributions of food aid in-kind and livestock/agriculture inputs.

Although traditional interventions dominated the drought response, it is clear that the seeds of more market-sensitive humanitarian response options – options that broaden the base of private sector engagement beyond contracted transporters and local suppliers – had begun to take root during the 2011 response. As part of the widely embraced ‘resilience’ agenda in the drought-prone regions of Kenya, these market-friendly innovations and widening private sector partnerships, some first tested during the 2011 drought response, have become firmly embedded in post-drought responses and are central to planning for future drought preparedness and response.

During the drought, the private sector partnered with the government and international agencies in a number of notable ways. In addition to the more traditional (and still dominant) contracting of transporters and suppliers for delivery of food and the procurement of food and non-food items, banks and telecom companies were contracted to deliver cash transfers to registered beneficiaries. Humanitarian agencies and the government also provided subsidies to the private sector, especially in the livestock trade, in order to maintain market structures. Weather-based insurance for livestock was also piloted during the drought. Finally, the Kenyan corporate community, in partnership with the KRCS, played a ground-breaking role in fundraising, donating technology platforms and ensuring transparency and accountability (e.g. pro bono finance and accounting services) through the Kenyans for Kenya (K4K) initiative (see Box 1).

### 2.1.1 Traditional contracting for drought response

Untangling expenditures on contracts to the private sector for the 2011 drought response is difficult since government and agency programmes often spanned the extended 2008–2011 drought period, and because many agencies contract out goods and services independently. Nevertheless, the government’s drought response priorities give some indication of where the private sector was most engaged. According to the government’s post-disaster needs assessment, government expenditures focused on water (including water trucking and fuel subsidies),

## Box 1: The Kenyans for Kenya initiative

The Kenyans for Kenya (K4K) initiative used mobile banking and social media platforms provided pro bono by telecoms and media companies – notably Safaricom, Kenya’s largest mobile provider, but its competitors as well – to attract individual donors and aggregate their contributions towards the KRCS emergency response. Companies also made cash contributions as part of their corporate social responsibility commitments. In-kind contributions were collected by participating companies. Other private sector partners, such as Kenya Commercial Bank and major auditing companies, offered pro bono financial and auditing services. The K4K initiative far exceeded its initial fundraising target of Ksh 500m, eventually raising over Ksh 7.5 billion (approximately \$8.5m) as well as donations in-kind valued at Ksh 278m (Zehra Zidi, 2012). Even so, the overall amount raised was a small fraction of the humanitarian aid received in response to drought appeals (\$427.4m) (Fitzgibbon, 2012).

livestock (including off-take), health and nutrition (including supplementary and therapeutic feeding), agriculture (inputs supply) and food aid (GoK, 2012b). The procurement of food aid (including nutrition interventions), water trucking, livestock off-take and agricultural inputs, as well as associated transport and logistics costs, all relied heavily on local private sector suppliers.

Some indication of the volume of this type of traditional private sector engagement in drought response can be seen from the activities of one of the main players, WFP. In August 2011, WFP revised its programme (roughly 2009–2011) in the arid and semi-arid lands from 800,000 beneficiaries to a total of 1.7m through general food distributions and food- or cash-for-assets activities. This brought WFP’s overall operational budget for the period to a total of \$527m, of which \$97.8m was allocated for landside transportation, storage and handling, most of which is procured through the private sector. Food costs budgeted for the period amounted to \$271m, including locally and regionally purchased food (WFP, 2011). In 2011, WFP purchased a total of \$66m of commodities from the East African Community, of which \$22.9m was procured in Kenya (WFP, 2012).

## 2.1.2 Private sector platforms for cash transfers

The use of cash transfers through financial institutions and mobile money services (MMS) during the 2011 drought response has received a great deal of attention, although the interventions were pilot in nature and represented a relatively small proportion of overall transfers. WFP estimates that 10–15% of its 2011 drought response transfers was in the form of cash. Likewise, its ongoing cash transfers for safety nets and resilience-building in drought-prone areas remain small next to in-kind food transfers. Nevertheless, the switch to cash for drought response and the new partnerships forged with banks and telecom companies represent a radical departure from traditional emergency response practice in Kenya. According to one donor representative, the 2011 drought response put to rest any remaining debate in Kenya about the merits of food in-kind versus cash or voucher transfers: the default thinking in the humanitarian community now is that cash is preferable to in-kind transfers as long as adequate market structures are in place. The reverberations of this transformation have been felt by those in the private sector at local level who traditionally have benefited from the humanitarian aid economy. One small-scale transporter in Lodwar (Turkana County) is refitting his vehicles to seek new clients because ‘we are aware that aid is over’.

Working with its NGO partners, WFP has been exploring innovative mechanisms – with the private sector – to deliver relief transfers, in cash, to food-insecure households. In both its resilience-building activities and in its drought response, WFP has tested two models: a banking model, where cash transfers are made electronically to beneficiaries’ personal accounts (in WFP’s case with Equity Bank); and through the mobile money services of mobile network operators Safaricom (M-PESA), the giant in the Kenya market, and Orange (Orange Money). Other mobile network operators in Kenya (Yu and Airtel) also offer mobile money services, though their market share is much less than Safaricom’s.

Under the banking model, beneficiaries open accounts with Equity Bank and are issued ATM cards to withdraw cash at village bank agents. Equity also provides financial literacy training to beneficiaries. NGOs in Turkana described similar arrangements for their activities in partnership with other banks (Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB), Postbank and the Co-operative Bank of Kenya). Equity Bank and KCB also provide financial literacy training in Isiolo County.

A major advantage of the banking model is that the full services of a bank – savings, loans, insurance etc. – are available to a beneficiary once he or she has opened an account. A major disadvantage, from a humanitarian point of view, is the lengthy processing time for opening accounts and issuing ATM cards. As a WFP self-assessment notes, in the ‘emergency setting the limitations of the bank account model became clear: opening bank accounts and distributing cards is a lengthy process not suited to a short-term, large-scale emergency response’ (WFP, 2013). Furthermore, without the labour-intensive work of community-based targeting and sensitisation (including financial literacy training), ‘most households stopped using their accounts when the programme ended’. On the other hand, setting up accounts during non-emergency periods, as the Kenya Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP) is doing, is good drought preparation and a contribution to longer-term development.

Using mobile money services is a simpler, less time-consuming and cheaper process. In its pilot emergency response programme, which targeted three harder-hit arid counties (Isiolo, Turkana and Wajir) that previously had received only food aid, WFP was able to register beneficiaries (including issuing their SIM cards) in a single day for those under M-PESA, and in 2–3 days for those under Orange Money (for whom an Equity Bank account was also simultaneously opened). Beneficiary verification and payment processing took more time, but the average wait for beneficiaries between verification and receiving their money was just 23 days.

A major impediment to enlarging both the banking model and, to a lesser extent, the MMS model is coverage. Both require cell phone network coverage and the presence of agents who can disburse cash on demand close to beneficiaries. The Safaricom/M-PESA network is large (15m subscribers in 2012, up from below 20,000 in 2007) expanding quickly and well accepted by consumers. The other mobile operators are likewise expanding their network coverage, and more cost-efficient models for erecting and sharing the use of new cell phone towers among operators are now being explored. In addition, new regulations spearheaded by the Central Bank of Kenya may result in Safaricom having to open up its M-PESA platform to other mobile firms, which would allow cash transfers from any provider to reach as deeply as the existing M-PESA network (Wokabi, 2013). The banks, led by Equity, are likewise expanding their branch and agent network to more marginal areas, though at a slower pace and with a view towards growing longer-term client relationships.

Despite the feverish pace of growth of M-PESA and its competitors into more marginal areas and the positive experience of WFP and others in piloting relatively small-scale emergency cash transfers, there are still significant obstacles to using these innovative private sector platforms to transfer cash to beneficiaries on a large scale. A number of humanitarian actors pointed to insufficient geographical coverage by the banks and mobile providers. One NGO, an early humanitarian agency to partner with M-PESA following the post-election violence in 2008, and which continues to work successfully with it on cash transfers in slums, dismissed the possibility of using mobile money for its cash transfer operations in Marsabit County due to poor mobile phone coverage. The NGO instead opted for alternative partnerships with private sector actors, subsidising small kiosk owners to serve as cash distribution agents.<sup>1</sup> Humanitarian actors in Turkana and Isiolo County also noted that cell coverage was limited to larger towns and along some stretches of main roads. A number of humanitarian actors also voiced concerns about M-PESA's reluctance to adjust its business practices to meet the auditing and accountability needs of NGOs or UN agencies. Referring to Mandera, Wajir and Garissa counties, another international NGO emphasised a general lack of private sector interest in these areas due both to the sparseness of the population and to insecurity. This NGO is now hopeful that its recent nine-month negotiation with Sharia-compliant First Community Bank to open a branch in Mandera will allow it to transfer the management and risks of its micro-lending schemes to a commercial entity. This will be the first time in this NGO's extensive global micro-lending operations that a micro-lending programme has been taken commercial.<sup>2</sup>

A further impediment to growing the humanitarian-private sector relationship for emergency cash transfers is the shortage of cash donations from donors and the continuing supply-side availability of food commodities. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which, along with DFID, the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), has been leading donor efforts to enhance the use of cash and vouchers in Kenya – and which itself was a major cash contributor during the

2011 drought response – noted that cash donations continued to lag well behind in-kind donations.<sup>3</sup> The WFP office in Lodwar, citing its stronger food commodity pipeline, noted that it was a lack of cash resources rather than operational or technical issues with the private sector that was hampering efforts to expand its cash transfers in the region.

A recent WFP study, funded by ECHO, on markets and financial services in Kenya's arid lands is optimistic about the prospects for expanded cash-based interventions, but is cautious about the pace of that expansion (WFP/ECHO/GoK, 2013). Noting market constraints such as fluctuating food availability (and volatile prices) in local markets as a result of seasonal production cycles and poor transportation, the study recommends targeting cash-based interventions to larger markets (e.g. district headquarters-sized towns) and only gradually expanding to local markets as the road infrastructure improves. The study notes that, while connectivity for mobile money and banking services is rapidly expanding in and around trading centres, geographical expansion to more remote areas is slower. The extension of cash or voucher programmes, according to the study, will be constrained by the pace of that expansion: the study recommends limiting cash and voucher programmes to beneficiaries living no more than 30 kilometres from district headquarters and a few other selected markets on the main transport corridors. Others suggested that the study was over-cautious on the roll-out of cash programmes, noting that decades-old institutional practices and incentives for food aid in-kind – for donors, the government, agencies and contractors – were probably slowing, unconsciously or not, the pace of change. The availability of mobile agents could take the coverage of services well beyond the proposed 30km radius in parts of the ASALs.

Irrespective of the pace of implementation of new financial transfer models, there will continue to be questions about the relative value for money of the various models (cash, vouchers, bank agent, mobile money, etc.) in different settings.

The march of mobile coverage in Kenya is expanding rapidly, augmented by technological innovations such as soon-to-be-introduced satellite-linked SIM cards.<sup>4</sup> Many

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1 Interview, international NGO, Nairobi.

2 Interview, international NGO, Nairobi.

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3 Interview, donor representative, Nairobi.

4 Interviews with Equity Bank, Lodwar and CaLP, Nairobi.



informants interviewed by the study team referred to complete mobile coverage in Kenya as inevitable and even imminent. Others were more cautious about the pace of expansion, but investments such as the \$298m set aside by Safaricom in 2012 to expand its network across the country confirm the trend (Daily Kenya, 2012). That said, for some of the reasons outlined above the ability of humanitarian actors to partner with the private sector in Kenya to deliver basic drought relief in the form of seamless electronic cash transfers may remain constrained, at least for the time being. One expert on cash and voucher transfers in Kenya extolled the degree of learning about markets and potential private sector partners in arid and semi-arid lands that the 2011 cash and voucher experiments had prompted. In his view, a paradigm shift in thinking towards market-sensitive approaches has taken place among humanitarians, though he echoed concerns about delivery capacity. Should Kenya be faced with a drought of similar dimensions in the short term, he estimated that cash transfers would only comprise 5% to 10% more of the response than during 2011.<sup>5</sup>

### 2.1.3 Subsidising the livestock market for emergency preparedness and response

Another significant private sector partnership during the 2011 drought response involved supporting private sector livestock actors and markets. As with cash and vouchers for food-insecure households, the study team found a strong awareness of market-sensitive interventions. Humanitarians, local private sector actors and government officials all pointed to the importance of drought response activities built on partnerships with the private sector. These actors contrasted more recent humanitarian interventions that protected livestock-based livelihoods with older interventions that circumvented the private sector and undermined or distorted markets.

Emergency programmes supported by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in response to threats to livestock in 2009 and 2011 were based on newly adopted guidelines for protecting and rebuilding livestock assets (FAO, 2013) and explicitly sought to avoid past (and in some cases still continuing) practices of poorly timed, market-distorting destocking. In the past, a standard practice had been to slaughter weak animals and distribute the meat for free to poor households – an inefficient food transfer (lack of refrigeration means that it needs to be consumed immediately) that also does little to protect livelihoods or the livestock trade. Instead,

livestock dealers were provided with subsidies to carry on their normal trade even as their business risks increased because of uncertainties about the quality and quantity of livestock available for purchase. This kept the wheels of commerce rolling – with livestock traders transporting in goods to drought-affected communities and transporting out healthy animals before drought conditions (or the perception of drought conditions among traders) made livestock unmarketable. A number of other market-friendly, private-sector partnership programmes – aiming to protect livestock livelihoods – were implemented during the 2011 drought response. One supported by Save the Children and Oxfam helped butchers and other small vendors in Wajir and Mandera to source meat, milk and fish locally and distribute them to up to 80,000 drought-affected people monthly through voucher programmes.<sup>6</sup>

Private sector livestock traders in Turkana and Isiolo counties, on the other hand, emphasised the overall weak integration of the livestock market in northern Kenya. They pointed to ineffectual government destocking interventions during the 2011 drought through the Kenya Meat Commission, as well as unfinished or under-performing government-financed abattoirs in both counties. In Turkana, only 2.6% of the county budget is allocated to the livestock sector, which nonetheless accounts for some 60% of the county's economy. This may be part of the reason why the private sector takes a dim view of the government's ability to contribute to improving conditions for livestock marketing.

### 2.1.4 Private sector partnerships for livestock and agriculture insurance

The humanitarian response to the 2011 drought included payouts for index-based livestock insurance policies being piloted in arid areas. Through a partnership between the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) based in Nairobi and the private insurance company UAP and its partner insurers (APA and Takaful Insurance of Africa), livestock holders in Marsabit County who purchased insurance in 2010 received payouts of approximately Ksh 10,000 (roughly \$150 per family) in October 2011 and again in March 2012 as a result of the drought conditions. A recent review of the impact of the insurance scheme reported substantial immediate benefits for insured families – including on household food security – as well as positive spill-over effects for the non-insured in the community (Janzen, 2012). The scheme is now being expanded into Isiolo and Wajir counties.

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5 Interview, international expert, Nairobi.

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6 Interview, donor representative, Nairobi, and Fitzgibbon (2012).

Another micro-insurance weather index initiative, Kilimo Salama ('Safe Agriculture'), is a partnership between the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture (of the Swiss agribusiness Syngenta), UAP insurance and Safaricom (payouts are made through M-PESA). Kilimo Salama reported payouts of Ksh 9m (roughly \$105,000) during 2011, with its operations centred in Laikipia County. Although small in scope and with uneven results (according to NGOs working in the same areas), these public-private partnerships for insurance offer a potentially powerful and cost-efficient alternative to post-disaster humanitarian aid.

### 2.1.5 Private sector fundraising for drought response

As previously mentioned, the 2011 drought response included unprecedented participation from the Kenyan corporate community and from ordinary citizens raising funds to support KRCS emergency and post-emergency drought responses. When asked by the study team about private sector engagement with humanitarian action in Kenya, most private sector actors (as well as many UN, NGO and government officials) focused almost exclusively on the K4K model and on fundraising for the KRCS. Private sector partnership was usually equated with fundraising opportunities, suggesting a quite straightforward interpretation of private sector engagement with humanitarian action, as opposed to the more nuanced discussions on private-public partnerships in the international humanitarian world. One representative of a UN humanitarian agency suggested that this pointed to the need for humanitarians in Kenya to do a better job of educating the public and the corporate sector on the complexities of humanitarian action, perhaps through concerted efforts with the media. Both BBC Media Action (BBCMA) and the Nation Group highlighted a lack of media interest in humanitarian messaging, which instead relies largely on humanitarians (or organisations such as the BBCMA) producing programming or paying for spots on local radio.

## 2.2 Private sector contributions to emergency preparedness and resilience

This study found little evidence of structured private sector engagement in emergency preparedness activities prior to the 2011 drought. According to government

officials from the NDMA and the National Disaster Operations Center (NDOC), the private sector is not a formal member of government emergency preparedness structures such as the Kenya Food Security Steering Group, though the government is currently revising its disaster management policy with the aim of streamlining and clarifying national government roles. Once this policy is approved, the new disaster management structures will be better able to include private sector participants – a prospect that was welcomed by the officials interviewed.

A number of companies offered some anecdotal evidence of their own business continuity and disaster preparedness activities. East Africa Breweries, for example, cited the effect of droughts on its supply chain, noting that it procured 30% of its starch from sorghum grown in dryer areas of Kenya, and that stockpiling grain was a business necessity. Supplies fall during drought and, when WFP enters the market, according to the Breweries, prices for cereals are further inflated. The private sector was more heavily engaged in preparedness exercises led by OCHA for the 2013 elections, as discussed below. Safaricom and other companies alluded to extensive, and confidential, disaster management and continuity plans for their own businesses.

### 2.2.1 Cementing ongoing humanitarian and the private sector partnerships around resilience

In the post-drought period, many of the private sector partnerships described above have been maintained and continue to grow, particularly in the context of resilience programming that incorporates disaster preparedness and risk reduction elements. Clearly, the resilience agenda (confirmed in the Kenyan government's Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA)), has taken hold as a common vision among all categories of actor interviewed by the study team, and the more market-sensitive approaches employed in the 2011 drought (many with direct private sector partnerships) have been easily transferable to activities now being implemented by dual-mandated agencies and NGOs. As one long-serving local government official in Lodwar put it, 'everybody's talking DRR now ... something that was not seen in the past. The issue is that we had become dependent on emergencies; the NGOs would come and say "take, take" and then leave in six months'. The official described a growing consensus across the county and down to the village level around the need for effective DRR activities.

The Equity Bank manager in Lodwar echoed these sentiments – ‘we want long-term solutions, not short; I know some of the NGOs would not want to hear that’.

One of the most extensive ongoing private–public partnerships related to resilience and drought response is the Kenya Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP), which targets impoverished households in four counties, Mandera, Wajir, Marsabit and Turkana. Phase 1 of the HSNP, from 2008–12, funded cash transfers to 69,000 households (approximately 500,000 people). Equity Bank managed the transfers through its banks and agents. Phase 2 aims to register and provide full bank accounts to 400,000 households across the four counties. International NGOs are organising the registration process, while the programme pays Equity Bank to open the accounts. The HSNP will make regular transfers to 100,000 of the poorest households as part of its ongoing social safety net programme, and the remaining accounts can be used for cash transfers in times of drought. It should be noted, though, that HSNP payments are currently not being proposed as an alternative to food aid, nor could they substitute at this stage for in-kind deliveries where markets are not functioning. Nevertheless, as pointed out in a recent analysis, a major objective of the HSNP is hunger reduction and ‘it would clearly be practical and efficient if WFP’s (food assistance) pipeline could be distributed using the same card (and also using private distribution agents and traders in the mode of the HSNP)’ (Fitzgibbon, 2012). This HSNP–Equity partnership is a potential game changer for addressing future drought needs in the arid areas of Kenya.

Similarly, the major UN agencies and international NGOs continue to grow and expand their partnerships with mobile money operators and banks in the context of their post-drought resilience-building efforts. For example, a joint WFP–Equity Bank–MasterCard ‘cash-lite’ pilot was rolled out in August 2013 with the aim of overcoming the shortage of physical cash in remote and insecure areas. The experiment allows beneficiaries to receive cash on a MasterCard-branded bankcard and then spend that cash electronically at nearby retail shops equipped by Equity Bank to accept bank transactions.

### 2.2.2 Opportunities for new public–private partnerships around resilience

In some of the arid areas of Kenya – and almost certainly in parts of Turkana County – the post-

2011 drought period appears to be characterised by a growing convergence of interests among important private sector actors and the humanitarian/development community. One bank in Lodwar, for example, described its efforts to ‘bank’ a large proportion of the population of Turkana County as part of its role as a lead partner on phase 2 of the HSNP. The bank is being subsidised by the HSNP to expand its client base in the region (at present only 2% of Turkana’s population of about 850,000 has a bank account). Phase 2 of the HSNP will increase the number of beneficiary households in Turkana from 30,000 families in Phase 1 to over 40,000 and make them all, for the first time, full holders of bank accounts. The average household family size across the four arid regions covered by the HSNP is 7.2 (HSNP, 2013), meaning that around one-third of the population or more of Turkana alone will become banking clients under Phase 2. The plan is for this number to be increased if warranted by drought conditions.

Clearly, the bank sees commercial possibilities beyond the HSNP that make its partnership with the programme so attractive. The bank’s branch manager described the region as the country’s next big economic frontier, citing a growing level of interest in the region from his bank’s management as well as the imminent opening of a number of other bank branches in Lodwar. Discoveries of major water and oil resources in the region are an important driver of this interest. A range of actors interviewed fully expected the transport and communication infrastructure in the region to be upgraded soon to enable exploitation of these resources

### Box 2: Refugees and the private sector

Kenya’s refugee camps present a particular opportunity for the private sector. Research for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 2010 reported that 5,000 businesses, ranging from individual traders to large shops, were operating in the Dadaab camp, with an annual turnover of \$25m (DANIDA, 2010). Around 30% of UNHCR’s funding for Dadaab in 2011 came from the private sector, although almost all was from outside Kenya. Some local and international private sector partnerships are funding programmes in the camp, including a collaboration between Safaricom and Microsoft on e-learning programmes.

– investments that would benefit the resilience objectives of donors and agencies, as well as future humanitarian responses. Similar trends in private sector engagement were described by actors operating in other drought-prone regions, though the pace of change is unlikely to be as quick without the pull of such large extractive and natural resource opportunities.

## 2.3 The private sector and emergency preparedness and response around election violence

Political violence broke out in Kenya around the 2007 election, after a relatively peaceful election in 2002, and on an unprecedented scale and breadth across the country. In all about 1,200 people were killed and 664,000 displaced, thousands of whom still are. Privately owned vernacular radio stations, set up following commercial pressure on the government to liberalise the airwaves to serve and sell to particular ethnic and linguistic communities, had played a part in inciting violence by broadcasting hate messages, as did viral hate text messaging (Deane, 2013).

The levels of violence shocked the international community and much of the Kenyan private sector. Transport routes were disrupted for the first 2–3 months of 2008, with fuel prices rising sharply as far afield as eastern DRC. The Kenya Shippers Association (KSA)<sup>7</sup> liaised with the police to advise its members on how best to secure their supply chains. This was the first time that political violence had seriously damaged business, and after the violence was over the private sector used its network of business associations to apply pressure on the government to tackle the root causes of the violence (usually judged to lie in the winner-takes-all Constitution, post-colonial land distribution and a culture of impunity) and avoid a repeat.

During the violence new privately owned websites such as Ushahidi started to use crowd sourcing to record and map incidents of violence and human rights abuses. The private sector contributed to the National Humanitarian Fund for the Mitigation of Effects and Resettlement of Victims of the post 2007 Election Violence, but beyond the media did not feature significantly among the

witnesses to the Waki Commission, which investigated the violence. The international humanitarian community was involved in funding relief efforts for the displaced, but like others was caught largely unprepared for the scale of the violence.

Between 2008 and the 2013 elections major changes were made to the Constitution, hate speech was made a crime and all mobile phone users were required to register before getting a SIM card. A very thorough preparedness process was put in place involving the government, the KRCS and international humanitarian agencies and donors, led by OCHA. Hubs were set up in regional centres to help reduce the risks of violence and make contingency plans. Some hubs, such as Kisumu, actively involved the private sector; some business leaders were reported to have influenced political leaders to show restraint, and the public and private media moderated their tone to the extent that they were accused by parts of the media of being supine. KRCS led a ‘vote peace’ campaign using text messaging, and persuaded political leaders to sign a public commitment to honour the election results and take any complaints through the courts. Ushahidi and other sites were primed to monitor election violence. In the end, although 192 people are reported to have died during the elections, the poll was widely judged a success and many of the contingency plans that had been drawn up did not have to be used. The private sector had played a part in this, albeit not in a systematic way.

Politically driven violence returned with the Al-Shabaab attack at the Westgate Centre in Nairobi on 21 September 2013, which left 67 people dead and 175 injured. Here the first responders were the KRCS and the local business community, which was directly affected in the attack. Westgate is a significant business centre – the supermarket chain Nakumatt, for example, took 14% of its revenue through its Westgate store. In response to the attack, one mobile network operator set up hotspots pro bono around Westgate to enable communications; it and other telecoms providers coordinated by KRCS set up a fund for the victims which had raised \$1m within a week from individual and corporate donations, many made by mobile phone. By mid-October, total donations amounted to Ksh 123m (close to \$1.5 m) (Njagi, 2013). Accountancy firms agreed to audit the use of funds pro bono, and twitter users were quick to question the use of the funds, half of which went to pay medical bills at local private hospitals. Security aspects of the Westgate crisis were handled by the Kenyan police and army, with

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<sup>7</sup> Interview, KSA.

some initial involvement from local private security companies, but much of the rest of the response was led by KRCS and the private sector, filling in for a perceived lack of government action.

Westgate was the first direct, large-scale attack on Nairobi's business community and their families. When their business interests are directly threatened

or harmed, as with the blockage of roads during the post-election violence or the attack at Westgate, the business community does react. KEPSA and the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) both cited advocacy and lobbying efforts with the government for security sector reform and improved security enforcement in response to both the post-election violence and the Westgate attack.



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# 3 Humanitarian–private sector engagement: opportunities and constraints

If humanitarian–private sector engagement in Kenya is to contribute further to national responses to future humanitarian crises, a number of the examples and trends described above could be built upon. In most cases, though, existing humanitarian–private sector engagement could be more strategic and more efficient – possibly, as a start, through a more structured dialogue between emergency and preparedness leaders in government and the humanitarian community and representatives of the private sector.

## 3.1 Growth, the private sector and implications for humanitarian action

One of the more promising opportunities for private sector engagement in humanitarian action over coming years is simply the widespread and growing awareness among humanitarian actors in Kenya (as well as within the Kenyan government) of the need to work within the slipstream of private sector activities and markets. As the 2011 drought response activities and the post-drought resilience work demonstrate, this is not about ceding humanitarian responsibility to the market, but instead about recognising that functioning markets will, for many who are currently perennial recipients of humanitarian aid, bring opportunities that will reduce the need for humanitarian assistance and – when it is needed – make that assistance more efficient and cost-effective. These market-friendly approaches and experiments could benefit from the sort of in-depth understanding of the private sector that comes with work such as the ECHO-WFP-government study on markets in the arid lands (cited above).

### 3.1.1 Partnering with the private sector for transport and logistics

The Kenyan private sector is strongly engaged in efforts to improve Kenya’s position as a regional

transport hub, including by improving trade links and port, rail and road infrastructure. The private sector, for example, partners closely with Trademark East Africa (TMEA), a donor-supported mechanism that works to increase trade, market access and competitiveness in the East African Community. The goals of TMEA coincide squarely with humanitarian procurement and logistics needs in the region, including maintaining efficient and open corridors to South Sudan, Somalia and northern Kenya. But while humanitarians are aware of discussions and are sometimes involved in meetings, there appears to be limited structured engagement of humanitarians in the debate between the private sector and the government about transport and infrastructure priorities.

### 3.1.2 Private sector platforms for delivering humanitarian aid in cash

Cash transfer platforms provide an opportunity for revolutionising humanitarian response in Kenya and for bringing long-marginalised populations into more integrated markets and the orbit of banking and financial services. The resilience agenda in Kenya is contributing to realising these possibilities. However, these humanitarian responses are largely still at the experimental stage and there are reasons for caution: switching to these platforms will be a slow process, especially as they are rolled out to distant areas; the sustainability with which bank and telecom systems can deliver aid rests on unproven business models; and dialogue between the private sector and humanitarian actors on shared and respective objectives is ad hoc and dispersed.

The remarkable spread of mobile money transfers and village-level banking in Kenya – now extending into more distant and drought-affected areas – brings a potential convergence of business and humanitarian interests to places where past emergency responses had few options for utilising private markets and delivery channels. Equity Bank and Safaricom are way out in front of the competition, though new financial players,

such as the First Community Bank in Mandera, are arriving. Ongoing resilience investments such as the HSNP or WFP's work on cash for assets suggest that these platforms may be moving closer to the point where humanitarian responses using cash transfers could be done on a large scale.

But there may be reasons to avoid complacency in thinking that the spread of mobile banking – whether the bank agent or mobile money model – will meet the immediate needs of humanitarian agencies or, more importantly, help to address the underlying causes of those needs. Most notably, there are legitimate questions about the incentives and business models of the telecom companies and the banks, and to what extent these coincide with independent and impartial humanitarian action. At the moment, a number of experiments are under way: on the humanitarian side to replace trucks and bags of food with M-PESA or Equity Bank digital transfers; and on the private sector side to test out whether the poor and dispersed populations of the arid and semi-arid regions of Kenya are a potentially profitable client base. For the most part relations between the two sides are contractual, and in that sense not much different from an aid agency contracting a local transporter to carry food to a distribution site. The existence of a thriving private sector (e.g. the growing coverage of mobile money) in some disaster-hit areas has spurred the humanitarian community to innovate, and contracts with these providers are helping to subsidise the expansion of the private sector further into remote areas. But it is not clear how sustainable that expansion will be if profits – independent of aid contracts – do not follow.

There are also reasons to be optimistic. Changing technology and innovations such as the bank agent model mean that the price of establishing a business presence and executing transactions is falling. There is also a fair degree of bullish thinking about the economy of the arid and semi-arid regions, based on mineral discoveries, improving transport and opportunities to further commercialise livestock owning as the demand for meat in Kenya grows, meaning a profitable client base may be on the way. Nevertheless, though both Equity and Safaricom, to take the two main players as an example, have made contributions in-kind to the ongoing experiments, there is still a need to clarify shared and unshared objectives between the two communities in order to ensure the best possible outcomes for future crisis-affected people. At the moment, from what the study

team heard, the dialogue in this area is mostly ad hoc and dispersed among many different humanitarian actors and many different private sector actors.

### **3.1.3 Keeping abreast of technological advances – and not just conceptually**

On the financial services and information technology side, the potential for other humanitarian (or humanitarian-related) products to reach disaster-affected populations, such as crop and livestock insurance, health services and improved market information, has only just begun to be explored. These are other areas where a deeper dialogue between the humanitarian and the private sectors – a partnership that goes beyond ad hoc contractual arrangements – may be valuable. One lesson from the regional Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP) team and echoed in other interviews is the importance of having the 'back offices' of humanitarian agencies – the finance, logistics, accounting and IT divisions – fully engaged in dialogue with private sector partners. According to experts, there is no shortage of humanitarian programme staff who can conceptualise a technological solution to a problem, but bottlenecks are overcome and real progress is made when the respective 'back offices' are talking to each other.

### **3.1.4 Livestock as a business – linking humanitarian action with the livestock market**

Interventions during the drought period that attempted to adapt to and support the livestock market demonstrated the potential for future humanitarian response strategies. In the future, pastoralists would see the weather forecast (on their mobile phones), destock and sell their still-healthy animals, bank their money with a mobile banking agent and buy more animals when conditions improve. Livestock associations and traders confirmed what FAO described as a growing understanding of the need to transform livestock rearing from a traditional cultural practice into more of a business. According to these stakeholders, pastoralists understand the effects of changing climate and are increasingly taking steps to protect their livelihoods by managing their herds to mitigate the risks of more frequent and severe droughts, investing in pasture, destocking in a timely way and so on. The government is making investments that will help, such as abattoirs in Lokichokio (completed) and Isiolo (under construction) that will allow for slaughter and preservation closer to pastoralists. Improved transport routes are essential to integrating the livestock trade with growing national



and global markets, such as Saudi Arabia and Yemen, where demand is strong. The combined effects of these investments could transform how pastoralists, traders and humanitarian agencies respond to future droughts.

### **3.1.5 Expanding the scope and understanding of corporate social responsibility**

Dialogue with banks and telecoms companies on their work in humanitarian action could be part of a larger discussion about how companies deploy their corporate social responsibility (CSR) resources, and how they might be used in the service of humanitarian needs. There is a growing awareness of, and commitment to, CSR among private sector actors in Kenya. The practice of establishing corporate foundations also seems to be taking hold. Most of the discussion is about responding with cash or in-kind donations in reaction to a particular event. The Safaricom–KRCS partnership begun with K4K is a good model for how an established partnership can be put into action quickly when a new disaster strikes. Following the Westgate attack, the model was re-established within 48 hours, allowing substantial funds to be raised but also showing how corporate expertise could be deployed in a crisis. Nevertheless, senior national and international humanitarian actors complained that there is little appetite for partnerships in which the private sector invests its skills or resources in preparedness activities, or in more laborious and longer-term post-disaster recovery and resilience-building.

Confirming the findings of many studies on global CSR incentives, Nielsen, the global information and measurement company, described how its commitment to contributing to Kenya's social and development needs was a major incentive for Kenyans returning from the diaspora to join the company. WFP and Nielsen, which have negotiated a global corporate partnership, have been exploring how Nielsen's expertise in collecting and analysing survey data might be used in Kenya in conjunction with vulnerability assessment mapping and beneficiary targeting. Building this type of more in-depth partnership, while also continuing to grow corporate sector giving, could help Kenya better manage and fund its humanitarian challenges in the future.

### **3.1.6 Connecting global private sector partnerships to national humanitarian efforts**

There are a number of global private sector partnerships with humanitarian agencies, but very few appear to have reached Kenya. Many local staff were

only passingly aware, if at all, of their agencies' global partnerships, and most humanitarian interviewees had little or no knowledge of existing initiatives for public–private partnerships, such as the World Economic Forum's Disaster Resource Partnership or the Fritz Institute's work through Global Hand. Others expressed the view that the partnerships served HQ interests and did not provide real added value – or resources – at the national level. Another complaint was that the terms of the partnerships negotiated at the global level were too inflexible to be useful in a local context (e.g. rates for consultancy services), and that HQ units were controlling the partnerships with a view to maintaining good relations with partners, but were not providing support for the very labour-intensive work of building meaningful partnerships at the national level. Where simple, transferable discounts had been negotiated (for example with Maersk shipping), agencies were able to take advantage at the local level.

There is growing multinational interest and presence in Kenya, and the study team did find some good examples where global partnerships had paid local dividends, such as WFP's MasterCard partnership setting up cash transfer payment systems using debit cards. As a humanitarian and regional hub with a growing multinational presence, Nairobi may be a good place for making a concerted effort on the part of humanitarian agencies and their global partners to translate these partnerships into meaningful action in the field.

Kenya has a Global Compact Network (GCN) with over 65 members. The CEO of Safaricom, Bob Collymore, is on the UN Global Compact Board. The Kenyan National Association of Manufacturers (KAM) provides the secretariat. The Kenya GCN has focused on business ethics and addressing corruption. It has not so far had a particular focus on humanitarian issues, but members of the international community could use KAM as a starting point for engaging business associations.

## **3.2 Future prospects**

KRCS, as first responder, and its private sector partners give Kenya a strength that many countries at a similar stage of development do not have, suggesting that Kenya will be able to handle small to medium crises with little outside support. If there is a further serious drought in the next three years, there is a good chance that improved weather forecasting,

mostly from private sector sources, will provide better warning, and mobile phone networks will be used to relay more accurate messages in good time to those who are vulnerable. But the expansion of cash transfers and experiments to keep markets open will have only limited extra coverage, and the international community will still need to provide a major financial contribution. Whether Kenyan government systems will be better than in 2011 depends in part on whether the new planning systems under preparation are more inclusive than their predecessors.

In the longer term, Kenya's humanitarian future is harder to gauge. The Vision 2030 aspiration is for the country to reach middle-income status and, as several interviewees told the researchers, not to rely on external assistance, especially for food. The Kenyan economy has the potential to grow quickly, boosted by oil revenues. Tullow Oil has so far discovered reserves of 300m barrels, and there is the prospect of more. The development of transport corridors through drought-prone areas, particularly the Lamu–South Sudan–Ethiopia Transport Corridor, and the spread of

### Box 3: Outline assessment of Kenya's current progress towards managing its own large-scale humanitarian crises

The pillars of humanitarian success for middle-income countries with strong private sector engagement, scored from 1 (little progress) to 5 (achieved) with trend steady (=), positive (+), or negative (–)

**1. Government-led preparedness planning system** that include the private sector, supported by best available forecasts and stockpiles/call down contracts with suppliers at pre-agreed rates

**Score: 2=** New ambitious policies are in place but current systems are under-developed and there are further management and budget uncertainties as a result of the unfinished/untested government devolution process. Private sector confidence in government delivery is low.

**2. Capacity to finance a crisis response** either through increased tax revenues or borrowing

**Score: 2=** There is a reasonable prospect that Kenya will be able to borrow on the financial markets in the next few years and to raise more tax or borrow large sums domestically in crisis.

**3. Transport system** that supports humanitarian response in crisis-prone areas

**Score: 2+** Transit times have improved in the last 3 years but there is a long way to go on the roads and port (and a barely functioning railway). However, there are good prospects of further improvement.

**4. Platforms for providing crisis support payments to vulnerable people** where they live

**Score: 3+** Kenya is a leader in Africa on the movement of money and banking for the poor.

There is encouraging progress through M-PESA, Equity Bank and others, though the roll-out of coverage is slowing as it moves towards poorer, more remote areas.

**5. Resilient markets**, including a market culture, in crisis-prone areas

**Score: 2=** There are encouraging experiments under way in drought-affected areas for both live-stock and agriculture markets, but these are on a small scale. Greater attention is needed to transport systems and to the longer-term commercialisation of livestock in pastoralist areas.

**6. A growing, educated middle class** willing to contribute to crisis response and hold humanitarian actors to account

**Score: 3+** The public is increasingly educated about humanitarian crises and has demonstrated a willingness to give generously. KRCS is trusted by the public as the first responder for small to medium crises and is held to account by the public and the media; no similar trust and accountability exists between the public and the government when it comes to crisis response.

**7. Popular communication systems that educate and inform on humanitarian issues** in addition to crisis reporting

**Score: 2=** Large media concentrate on crisis reporting, with the provision of humanitarian education and crisis information limited to smaller-scale, subsidised initiatives of agencies like UNICEF and BBC Media Action.

banking will bring opportunities for a more market-based arable and livestock economy. As droughts become more frequent pastoralists' view of their herds as symbols of prestige rather than as wealth to be managed is gradually changing. Whereas now the arid and semi-arid areas contribute marginally to Kenya's GDP, in the future that should change, and with it the political attention these regions receive.

As a middle-income country, Kenya should be able to raise resources domestically or on international markets to meet the costs of droughts. Increasing access to cash transfers delivered through the private sector will further reduce the need for food aid. In this scenario, the private sector is the source of extra wealth and resilience, for example through commercialisation of the livestock sector in the arid and semi-arid lands, reducing or avoiding humanitarian disasters and providing the delivery mechanism for the main relief effort, with

international humanitarian agencies increasingly playing an advisory role. For this transition to work smoothly, the government will need to play a guiding role, helped by the international humanitarian community and involving the private sector in planning in a much more systematic way. But there is a more difficult scenario, where droughts become more frequent, pastoralists commercialise only very slowly, the government is not able to provide leadership on drought management, rapid population growth continues and extra wealth in the arid lands, particularly oil revenues, fuels conflict, leading to a changed but not improved humanitarian situation.

Box 3 (opposite) provides a rough assessment by the study team of where Kenya currently is on the path to managing its own larger-scale crises with more limited external help, and suggests the current direction of travel. It is not comprehensive and is intended to stimulate debate.



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# 4 Opportunities and options

This study has tackled a broad subject in a relatively short period of time. The following suggestions and recommendations are therefore made with a commensurate degree of circumspection. They are also made against a background where Kenyans want to take more responsibility for managing their own humanitarian crises. This should mean a growing role for the private sector.

## 4.1 Taking advantage of changing markets

Taking greater responsibility for managing larger humanitarian crises will require encouraging markets to function during droughts and exploring new ways to transfer resources to people made vulnerable by crises. Currently donors are supporting a wide range of experiments in these areas. These should continue, but with stronger coordination to ensure that the best are taken to scale quickly. This process can best be coordinated by the government, working closely with the private sector and international donors.

At present donors are subsidising the private sector to conduct some of these initiatives, such as the HSNP. It was beyond the scope of this study to make recommendations on the scale of subsidies justified (e.g. for increasing geographic and population coverage or for creating insurance products) to take the best of the experiments to scale, but this warrants careful assessment. Technology changes mean that firms like Safaricom are making commercial decisions to invest in previously unprofitable areas, so subsidies will not always be necessary.

With the spread of private sector-facilitated cash transfer mechanisms to the arid and semi-arid lands, the need for food and non-food inputs from donors should decline. Food transporters will work increasingly for shop owners instead of NGOs. Preparedness planning for the next drought, however, needs to be intensified, especially for the arid lands covered by phase 2 of the HSNP. The government,

WFP and the HSNP donors will need to reach an agreement soon on the levels of food and cash inputs likely to be needed during the next drought.

As the economy of at least part of the arid and semi-arid lands changes with significant new investments (e.g. by foreign oil companies, but also with new water and transport links), it will be important for the humanitarian community to engage the larger private sector investors to sensitise them to humanitarian issues and build the relationships that would be needed in a crisis. Tullow Oil and World Vision are already doing some work together around Lodwar.

## 4.2 Procurement and transport

The donor agencies, which provide large-scale food and non-food inputs during a drought, mostly have established contracts that can be scaled up in times of crisis at pre-agreed rates. The study found less evidence of the Kenyan government operating in this way (e.g. to set up arrangements for water bowsering to avoid being overcharged in a crisis). There is scope to tighten this up to deliver better value for money.

A major effort is being made to improve transport throughout East Africa, which should speed up the transit times for relief items and reduce costs. The bigger agencies like WFP, which accounts for 4% of the traffic through Mombasa port, are not currently much engaged with planners of transport investment in East Africa, and should ensure that their voices are heard. We did not have a chance to study in detail the opportunities for supplying more relief items from within the region, but with transport links improving the opportunities to purchase food and higher-value nutritional supplements will grow.

## 4.3 Devolution

Devolution in Kenya is a major change being implemented quickly. Authority and resources

– including for important aspects of emergency preparedness and response – are being devolved from the national government to county authorities. The complexity of the process and its potential impact on humanitarian action should not be underestimated. With responsibilities still unclear and local systems untested, Kenya risks being less prepared if the next drought comes soon. That said, devolution and the creation of county and sub-county structures is an opportunity to reshape drought management to include the private sector in planning, particularly the mobile phone companies, banks and transporters which will be increasingly involved in response. This interaction might also help to avert the introduction of new county-level permits or fees that could make the movement of relief items more difficult. There will be a useful role for donors to play in supporting the new County Disaster Management Committees as they take shape, and encouraging private sector involvement.

## 4.4 Making the most of popular support in crises

Kenya has seen very encouraging responses to appeals for humanitarian assistance from both the private sector and private individuals. This will help as it takes more responsibility for managing its own crises, but there is scope to raise more from the public and private sector using the networks that KRCS, Safaricom and others have developed. The Kenyan private media could do more to help these campaigns. At present some of the Kenyan media sees itself as responsible only for reporting humanitarian crises. Other parts of the media are transmitting humanitarian information to help people affected by crises. Better humanitarian information – on what is needed to avert and respond to crises and who is responsible for what in the humanitarian system – will also provide the information Kenyans need to hold their government and humanitarian agencies to account.

For the longer term, if Kenya is to manage its own humanitarian crises and develop the arid and semi-arid lands in ways that reduce the risk of humanitarian crises, the private sector will have to play a larger role in delivering economic growth and sustaining markets, and delivering relief supplies and cash when droughts occur. The government

has set out a good vision and strategy, but with a lot for the public sector to deliver. The growing economic potential of the ASALs and the dynamism of parts of the Kenyan and international private sector need to be exploited fully to deliver on this vision. Parts of the business community are already engaged, but others are unlikely to get involved without a convincing case that their participation in preparedness and response will improve their profits. This study suggests that the elements of such a case are there. The international humanitarian community will be able to bring best practice from other countries, and KRCS has the local standing with the private sector and the public to help government and business associations in this task.

## 4.5 What does this mean for international humanitarian coordination?

Excellent preparedness work was undertaken before the 2013 election, including some with input from the private sector. Ethnic problems surface mostly during elections, but the risks remain substantial even when elections are not near. Resources for some international humanitarian organisations have declined substantially, but agencies such as OCHA should retain the key political relationships that they have developed and encourage the business and NGO communities to continue their monitoring of ethnic violence and human rights abuses.

The government's agenda for the ASALs is moving to longer-term development as a means of averting humanitarian crises. So there will be a need for the UN humanitarian agencies and others to work even more closely with the World Bank and others engaged on that agenda, as well as business associations, perhaps starting with KAM, which also leads on the Global Compact. These efforts should build on the private sector engagement strategies and processes being undertaken by major humanitarian agencies at the headquarters level. As this proceeds, staff in the field should be consulted on what partnerships will work best for them, and given a clear steer on how best to take advantage of these partnerships. That is, international, national and local efforts to build partnerships should take place simultaneously but not in parallel; they must

continuously return to the needs of crisis-affected people and aid agencies serving them on the ground. While there are many opportunities for linking up aid agencies and businesses, the time and resources

needed to build partnerships in the field should not be underestimated, particularly in countries such as Kenya where the traditional humanitarian sector is being substantially reduced.





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# Annex 1

## Interviewees

Abdalla Rashid Agolla	Head of Programmes, Islamic Relief Worldwide
Robert Allport	Assistant FAO Representative
Tito Arunga	National Agriculture Value Chain Officer, FAO
Nicholas Cox	Regional Advisor, USAID/OFDA
Simon Denhere	Regional Procurement Officer, WFP
Isabelle D’Haudt	ECHO
EJ Esekon ‘psc’ (K)	Managing Director, Lodwar Water and Sanitation Company Ltd.
Ahmed Abdelgadir Galal	Country Director, Islamic Relief Worldwide
Megan Gilgan	Regional Emergency Adviser, UNICEF
Abdi Godana	Business Growth and Development Manager, Equity Bank Isiolo
Noor Godana	Deputy NDMA Coordinator, Isiolo
Abbas Gullet	Secretary General, Kenya Red Cross Society
Emmanuel Gunei	Turkana Rehabilitation Programme
Duncan Harvey	Kenya Country Director, Save the Children
Cheryl Harrison	Coordinator, Programme Innovations, WFP Kenya
Glen Hughson	CALP Focal Point, Cash Learning Partnership
David Kamau	Head of Sub-Office, WFP Lodwar
Lisa Karanja	Regional Director Private Sector and Civil Society, TradeMark East Africa
David Kipkamei	Deputy County Commissioner Isiolo
Emmanuel Kisangau and Mark Ekai Lokaito	NDMA, Turkana County
Humphrey Kisembe	Economist, Shippers Council of Eastern Africa
Gabriel Kitenga	Group Head of Tax and Public Policy, East African Breweries Ltd
Mfaina Kibala	FAO, Lodwar
Patrick Lavandhomme	Deputy Head of Office, OCHA
Peter Lochuch	Childfund, Turkana
Benson Long’or	Oxfam, Turkana
Joseph Losuru	Chair, District Livestock Marketing Association, Lodwar
Raouf Mazou	Representative, UNHCR
Valerian Micheni	Drought Information Manager, National Drought Management Authority
Kennedy Mohochi	Chief Operations Officer, Kenya Association of Manufacturers, KAM
Charles Mukunya	Kenya Commercial Bank, Isiolo
Nelson Munyi	ACP, National Disasters Operations Centre (NDOC)
Ester Muriuri	General Manager Agribusiness, Equity Bank
Onesmus Mutio	Business Development Manager, YuCash
Judy Nemaisa	Head of Advocacy and Communications, Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA)
Joseph Ng’ang’a	Kenya Programme Officer, IFAD
Victor Ngei	Managing Director Special Projects, Nation Media Group
Magu Ngumo	General Manager QTV, Nation Broadcasting Division
Steve Nsubuga	Regional Logistics Officer, WFP

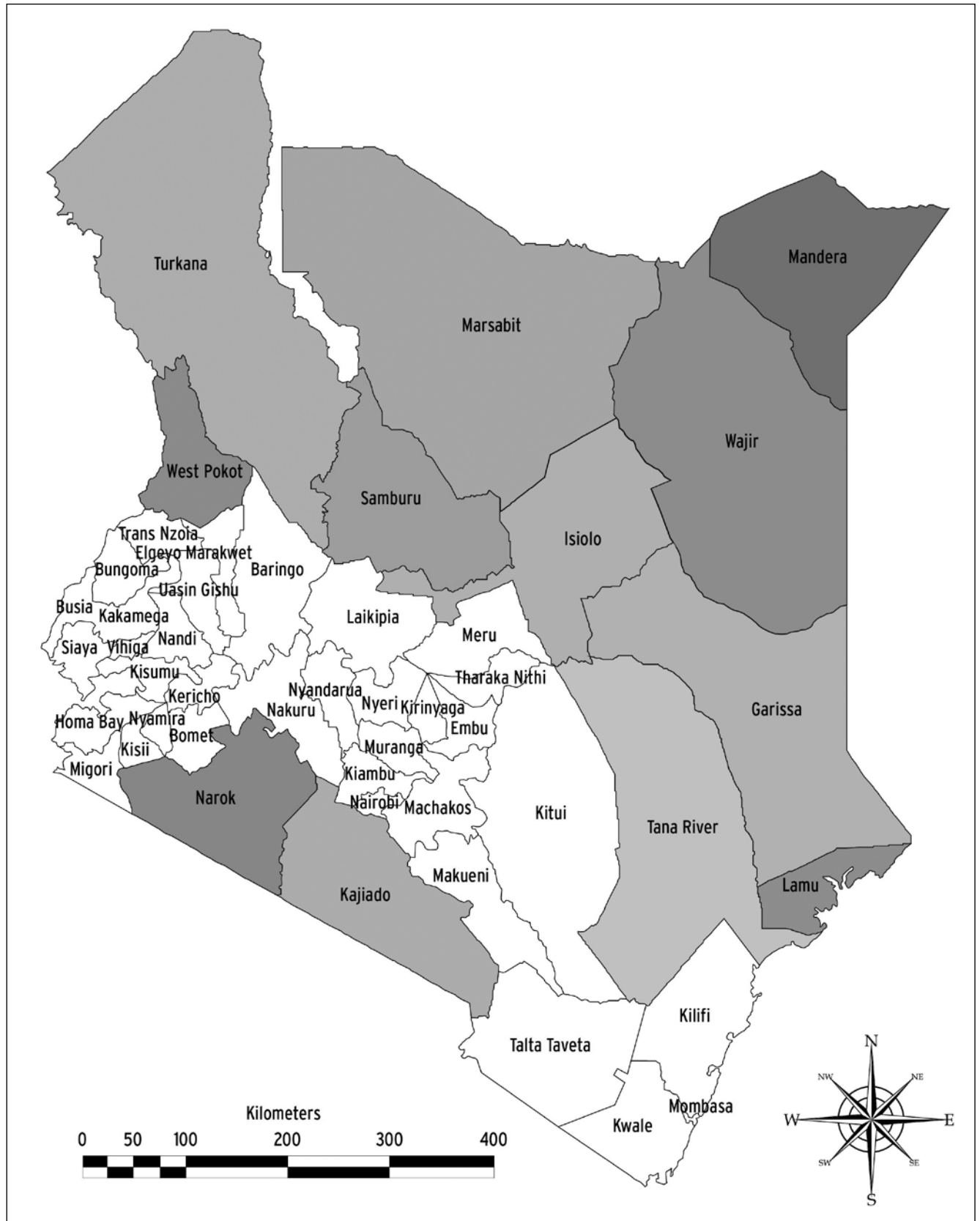
Joyce Nyaboga and Carol Morgan	BBC Media Action
Bernard Nyatuga	Programme Officer, WFP Kenya
Job K Nyorsok	Business Growth and Development Manager, Equity Bank, Lodwar
Anne O'Mahoney	Country Director, CONCERN Worldwide
Paul Omanga	Crops Production Officer, FAO
Byron Onyango	Safaricom
Immaculate Otieno	Manager, Safaricom Foundations
Karen Peachey	British Red Cross, East Africa Regional Director
Chris Porter, DFID	
Marcel Rudasingwa	Humanitarian Coordinator and UNICEF Representative
Deborah Saidy	Deputy Regional Director, WFP
David Stanton	Deputy Head TMEA
Philip K. Tarus	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Devolution and Planning
Allan M. Waititu	Director – ICT, Projects and Innovations, Equity Bank
Dwight Watson	Managing Director, South Africa & Sub Sahara, Nielsen
Gabriella Waaijman	Deputy Head of Office, OCHA East Africa
Nicholas Wasunna	Director Programme Development, World Vision
Anthony Weru	Senior Programmes Officer, KEPISA
Director	Ministry of Livestock, Turkana

### **Focus Group Discussion**

Members, Private Transporters' Association, Lodwar

# Annex 2

Map of the arid and semi-arid lands in Kenya



Source: The World Bank, 2012.



# HPG

## Humanitarian Policy Group

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