

Abstract

Rural Kalahari communities whose livelihoods are heavily dependent on rain-fed agriculture are exposed to increasing intensity and frequency of drought spells. Subsequently their resilience is gradually being eroded and they are left increasingly vulnerable. This study unearths and highlights the myriad measures employed by small scale agro-pastoralists to cope with and adapt to droughts. Such strategies include enrolling in the government's Labour Intensive Public Works Programme, harvesting larvae of *Imbrasia belina* (Westwood) moth for consumption and/or sale, supplementary feeding of livestock, providing water for livestock and selling part of the livestock herd while some households moved livestock to better grazing areas within the communal area and sought alternative sources of income outside agriculture. This fluidity and flexibility is necessary to manage the often harsh and unpredictable environment communities operate under. But more importantly, some of these currently used measures could be enhanced to buffer Kalahari agro-pastoralists from anticipated future dry spells in the Southern African region.