

Abstract:

Famine and drought have become a common feature in Africa. This book, based on research during the drought in Turkana District, Kenya, in 1979, is a critical analysis of indigenous patterns of survival and adjustment in response to the crisis. Sociological and environmental aspects of Turkana nomadic life are discussed, taking into account the ecological destruction of the region during colonial rule. Adaptive responses specific to the drought in 1979/80 shows that isolation, gender and old age negatively affect efforts to cope with the situation. Some current development projects in the region are also evaluated, highlighting the policy implications of the District Focus Strategy for Rural Development, the 8-4-4 education system, conservation practices and various other programmes in arid and semi-arid zones.