



PEACE, PROSPERITY AND
REGIONAL INTEGRATION

GOOD PRACTICES AND LESSON LEARNED ON 2015/16 EL NIÑO EARLY ACTION IN HORN AFRICA

By

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INTRODUCTION

- Much of eastern Africa is arid or semi arid with very large inter-annual climate variability;
 - Rainfall is the most critical climate element due to high degree of variability and very strong seasonality;
 - Risk and vulnerability of the society to climate extremes is increasing due to increasing population, change in land use and climate change;
 - El Niño/Southern Oscillation is the most important coupled ocean-atmosphere phenomenon to cause global climate variability on inter-annual time scales;
 - ENSO impacts in Horn of Africa are highly modulated by the local and regional climate systems including Indian Ocean Dipole;
 - Hence the need for monitoring and early warning.
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EL NIÑO 2015/2016 IMPACTS ON THE HORN OF AFRICA

Favourable rains

- Enhanced rainfall favoured arid and semi-arid areas with good pasture, crop development and replenished some water sources.

Drought

- Since May 2015, persistent drought conditions, most acutely in parts of Ethiopia and Sudan, and drier than average conditions in parts of Eritrea (coast), Greater Upper Nile region of South Sudan, parts of northern Uganda and parts of Somaliland and Puntland, in Somalia.

EL NINO 2015/2016 IMPACTS ON THE HORN OF AFRICA

Floods

- Enhanced El Niño-related rains have increased flooding along the main river systems in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda. However, the number of people affected by floods was less than expected.

DROUGHT AND FLOODS: NORTHERN AND EQUATORIAL



Crop failure in Sudan



Wilted Crop Jijiga agro pastoral, 30th August 2015.
Source: FEWS NET/WFP



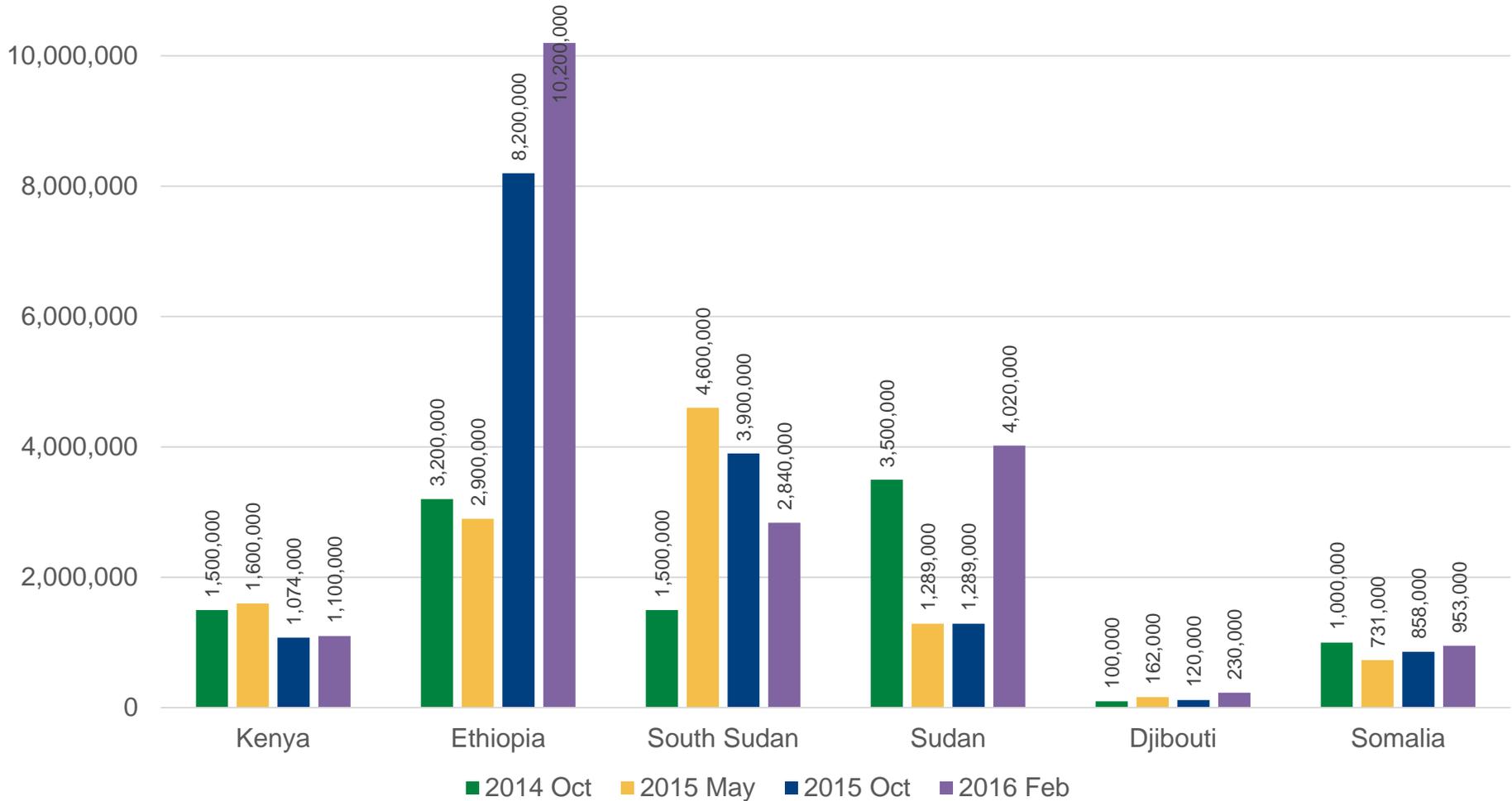
Narok, Kenya



Kampala, Uganda

FOOD INSECURITY TREND IN HOA

Source: FSNWG



TIMELINESS OF EL NIÑO RELATED MAJOR ICPAC ACTIVITIES

- First forecast on impending El Niño regional impacts was given during GHACOF 40 in May 2015, in Djibouti, Republic of Djibouti.
- GHACOF 41 in August 2015, in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania
- Navaisha high level meeting on El Niño in October 2015
 - MS comparing notes on contingencies planning
 - Likely impact scenarios were presented
 - Ministerial declaration
- GHACOF 42, February 2016, in Kigali, Rwanda
- GHACOF 43, May 2016 in Naivasha, Kenya
- GHACOF 44, August 2016 in Kampala, Uganda

WHAT WENT WELL?

Awareness Raising and Early Warning

- Extensive dissemination of EW messages at all levels and using different platforms reached over 221 million people in IGAD/EAC region (last mile communication)
- Use of social media (Whatsup, Baringo, Twitter) complemented dissemination using tri-media
- El Nino became famous/fashionable
- Use of “sober” communication that reached the local level
- Common messaging/messages disseminated by stakeholder working collectively as a team

WHAT WENT WELL?

Awareness and Early Warning

- Most people knew El Nino was coming due to public awareness and information provided by early warning agencies and broadcasters
- High media coverage played a big role in in the dissemination of EW messages and in informing the general population about El Niño
- Early warning institutions like ICPAC and NMHSs played a critical role in the production and dissemination of EW information;
- The FSNWG produced 2 El Nino Alerts which were disseminated to over 1,000 FSNWG email subscribers and over 80 member organisations;

WHAT WENT WELL?

Preparedness and Early Action

- Early warning initiated early action in countries
- There was political awareness and willingness to act
- Emphasis of preparedness at personal level
- Most countries developed contingency plans and allocated fund in its implementation
- Most countries conducted risk and vulnerability profiling and identified areas that would be impacted most
- No regret interventions undertaken include vaccination of livestock, structural mitigation measures, and pre-emptive evacuation from hazard-prone areas

WHAT WENT WELL?

Coordination

- All stakeholders worked collectively as a team, through in-country forums, and were sending coordinated messages
- IGAD took the lead in organizing regional stakeholder consultative meeting on El Nino preparedness which culminated in a declaration that initiated early action
- Immediate activation of national coordination structures and mechanisms with Governments taking lead
- GHACOF provided an opportunity to improve coordination between regional and national stakeholders and also between national to national coordination

WHAT LESSONS WERE LEARNED?

Awareness Raising and Early Warning

- People's level of understanding of El Niño differs from region to region and so do impacts
- Manage people's understanding about El Nino (that it is not a single event that comes in a day, has a start date, etc.)
- Ensure relevant communication packaging and lead time
- Information disseminators need to be well oriented on common messaging/messages
- Need to ensure that all information going out to public is consistent and accurate and regularly updated

WHAT LESSONS WERE LEARNED?

Preparedness and Early Action

- Insufficient partnership between state and non-state actors on early warning and early action with the latter a bit late in reacting timely to the early warning given
- Limited data in some countries to substantiate forecast
- Partners and organizations need to support contingency plans of Governments
- Need to coordinate roles and resources on preparedness and early action

WHAT LESSONS WERE LEARNED?

Preparedness and Early Action

- Investment needed in early warning services
- Contingency planning could have been done earlier
- Funds for preparedness and early action could have been released earlier

WHAT LESSONS WERE LEARNED?

Coordination

- IGAD consultative meeting should be held early enough to allow more time for coordination and early action
- Media needs to coordinate closely with climate information providers to ensure correct information is relayed to the public
- Better sharing of roles and responsibilities on who does what and where

CONCLUSION

- ENSO is a Pacific Ocean climate phenomenon with a global impact on weather/climate patterns;
- In Horn of Africa ENSO impacts are highly modulated by the regional and local climate systems;
- Positive impacts include potential increase in agricultural production and increased water levels in hydropower dams;
- Negative impacts include destruction of infrastructure and property, loss of lives as well as increased outbreaks of water related diseases over the equatorial sector and water scarcity as well as lost of livestock and crops over the northern sector;
- Investment in risk management in the region is still low compared to investment in response.

TAKE-AWAYS

- Early warning is crucial and should spur action
- There must be consistent and common messaging that is localized, non-alarmist, factual, and updated on regular basis
- Use all platforms and means for information dissemination to have as wide a reach as possible
- Contingency plans that all partners subscribe to and support are necessary
- Coordinated early action with a no regret approach and government leadership is imperative
- RECs should take leadership in coordinating regional and cross-border action and follow-through with Member States

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!