



ICRC



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

7th EL NIÑO update

[Regional Update for East Africa and Indian Ocean Islands/](#) 15th January, 2015

INTRODUCTION

Since beginning of October 2015, the IFRC EAIOI office has been sharing a updated compilation of ongoing El Niño preparedness and response initiatives from the Governments and Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, with the following objectives:

1. To enable all RC movement partners to be aware of ongoing El Niño preparedness measures in the region
2. To encourage National Societies to prepare to minimize El Niño related risks and to join in country coordination efforts on El Niño preparedness and response
3. To encourage National Societies to prepare to respond on time if an El Niño related event(s) affect their countries
4. To engage with donors and partners on the potential funding needs in relation to El Niño, and to encourage them to ensure that appropriate funding will be made available in a timely manner to support the affect National Societies

This seventh update¹, provides an update on the weather forecast for the weeks to come and the main areas at risk and to be monitored. It also gives summarized information on how El Niño has affected the Eastern Africa region between October 2015 and January 2016 (half), and what has been the response provided to the affected communities by the Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, with the support of the IFRC, the ICRC, Partners National Societies and governments in the region.

In a nutshell, so far, the effect of El Niño has not been as extreme as expected in EA and IOI, though causing significant damages in Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda, mostly due to drought, floods and landslides. It is important to note that in many countries, the agricultural and livestock sectors have benefited from the heavy rainfalls and are expected to reap above normal productive results in the weeks to come.

¹ This update has been developed by the IFRC east Africa regional and country offices in collaboration with National Societies, the Red Cross Climate Centre, the ICRC, and the French Red Cross (Plate-forme d'Intervention Régionale de l'Océan Indien, PIROI).

UPDATE ON THE REGIONAL CLIMATE FORECAST AND RISK ANALYSIS

The Regional Climate Outlook for early 2016 indicates that the enhanced (above normal) rainfall conditions that have prevailed since October to December 2015 would continue to dominate over most parts of the equatorial sector of the Greater Horn of Africa (GHA) region in months of January and February 2016. Suppressed (below normal) rainfall conditions is forecasted over most parts of the region further south of the equator during January – February 2016. Normally January and February is dry with no signs of rains and therefore any rains at this time will be attributed to El Niño².

Countries that are anticipated to continue experiencing the El Niño rains and its effects in January and February 2016 include Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Ethiopia.

Post El Niño Rains

Historical patterns show that a La Niña event sometimes follows an El Niño which is bound to have a greater overall humanitarian impact as coping capacities are eroded. This might lead to a further deterioration in the humanitarian situation across the Greater Horn of Africa. However, for now it is yet too early for weather scientists to give enough information on the level of risk of occurrence of such a phenomenon. but the IFRC EAI/OI will continue providing updates as and when more information are received from the meteorologists.

Overall situation for the most concerned countries:

Burundi

The short rains started on time in September and total rainfall amounts were average to above average from October to November. Continued above-average rainfall, driven in part by the ongoing El Niño, is expected through January and may result in isolated flooding.

The December to February Season harvest is expected to be below average in Mwaro, Citiboke, Bururi, Mayinga, Kirundo, Mukamba, Bujumbura rural, and Rumonge, due to the ongoing political crisis that is displacing households and disrupting agricultural activities³.

Ethiopia

The reverse seems to be the case with Ethiopia, where the effects of El Niño have contributed towards the worst drought in more than 50 years leading to below average Meher harvests in most eastern cropping areas. This has led to the deaths of hundreds of livestock, emaciated livestock body conditions and low livestock production in Afar and Northern parts of Somali Region. This trend is expected to continue with large food consumption gaps to be experienced. According to OCHA report as of 5th January 2016, 10.2 million people need emergency food assistance in 2016, while 435,000 children under five and 1.7 million children, pregnant and lactating women require specialized nutritional support.

In the west and south of the country, rainfall performance has been much better and near normal harvests are expected for the current season. These areas will be in Minimal (IPC Phase 1) or Stressed (IPC Phase 2) acute food insecurity through to March 2016⁴.

Kenya

According to the Kenya Meteorological Department (KMD) and a wide variety of other forecasts, the El Niño was expected to continue through December. These short rains were also expected to have typical spatial and temporal distribution, with rains extending to

² <http://www.icpac.net/wp-content/uploads/CLIMATE-WATCH-AUGUST-2015.pdf>

³ <http://www.fews.net/east-africa/burundi>

⁴ <http://www.fews.net/east-africa/ethiopia>

January in some parts of the country including Western, Central, South Eastern and the Coastal Kenya. However, in most areas, the rains were expected to end near a typical time in December. While the heavy rains caused disruptions including flooding, landslides and disruption of transport, **some sectors reaped maximum benefits from the expected good rains, depending on their level of preparedness.** Some of these areas include pastoral areas where significant improvements in food security are expected as the rains continue to improve the rangeland. In the South Eastern and Coastal Marginal areas, the above rains are likely to result in average to above average harvests in February or March, except in localised parts of Kwale and Makueni, which experienced a late start to the short rains and less cumulative rainfall⁵.

Somalia

- Generally in Somalia, the El Niño rains were not as strong as anticipated and the impact of those rains has been positive to a large extent.
- The riverine areas in Middle Shabelle in Southern Somalia were affected by the El Niño which led to flooding. The floods delayed planting, destroyed crops, and prevented households from accessing markets. El Niño induced Flash floods affected approximately 140,000 people. El Niño preparedness activities through regular updates, SMS, brochures and radio announcements, saved lives and livelihoods. (source: Somalia Food Security Cluster)
- **Food security is expected to improve between January and March as a result of increased livestock production and the anticipated above-average Deyr harvest in January/February.** Some pastoral areas in both the southern and northern regions are expected to improve to Minimal (IPC Phase 1), while a majority of the country remains Stressed (IPC Phase 2).
- Guban Pastoral livelihood zone received atypical, moderate rainfall in October and November 2015, which increased pasture and water availability. However, poor households in this region will remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through March but only with the presence of humanitarian assistance. This is due to very dry conditions in 2014 and 2015, which resulted in low livestock production, reduced incomes due to low livestock values, and unusual livestock losses during the drought in 2015, likely in part due to the ongoing El Niño⁶.

Uganda

- El Niño is likely to remain moderately strong through mid-2016. While threats from flooding and water logging remain in bimodal areas, there is a reduced likelihood of atypical, erratic rainfall from January to March 2016. As a result, large-scale flooding is no longer expected.
- **Heavy rainfall from November to December 2015 has regenerated pasture and water availability in N. Western and N. Eastern Uganda, improving livestock body conditions and allowing some households to harvest vegetables, increasing food access.** However, poor households in Karamoja, Moroto and Kaabong districts continue to face food insecurity, due to the early depletion of food stocks⁷.

⁵ <http://www.fews.net/east-africa/kenya/food-security-outlook/october-2015>

⁶ <http://www.fews.net/east-africa/Somalia>

⁷ FEWS NET UGANDA fews.uganda@fews.net www.fews.net/Uganda

Sudan

Since the beginning of December, heavy seasonal rainfall due to El Nino caused floods, damaging the infrastructure and causing fatalities in Tokar locality on the Red Sea coast of Sudan. Flash floods from the highlands in Ethiopia also triggered abnormal river flooding of the Al Gash River in Kassala state in eastern Sudan. This flooding is expected to increase food production through the ongoing irrigation projects.

In Darfur and Kordofan States, the rains were below average leading to low food production. This is expected to impact the prices of food and increase the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance as the lean season begins in March 2016⁸.

⁸ www.fews.net/east-africa/sudan

SUMMARY OF EL NINO IMPACT AND RESPONSE ACTIVITIES (OCT 2015 – first half Jan 2016)

COUNTRY	EVENTS	DAMAGES AND AFFECTED AREAS	DATE	NATIONAL SOCIETY RESPONSE	SOURCE OF RESOURCES
Burundi	<p>Heavy rainfall accompanied by strong winds causing landslides and floods</p> <p>Heavy rainfall accompanied by strong winds causing landslides and floods last night 13th January</p>	<p>37 deaths, 72 wounded persons, 4,002 affected households, 4,503 houses destroyed, 223 schools damaged, 147 infrastructures and more than 12,663 hectares of cultivated fields destroyed in Cibitoke, Bujumbura rural (Rumonge), Bubanza, Makamba, Bujumbura Mairie and Rutana.</p> <p>A total of 8 deaths, 3 wounded people, 4 brigdes destroyed, 83 houses totally destroyed, 16 latrines destroyed in Makamba, 3 classrooms destroyed.</p> <p>NB: The rapid assessment is ongoing in the affected Branches and we are waiting for other figures and data eg. hectares of cultivated fields destroyed.</p>	September to December 2015	<p>BRCS : Support in shelter, NFIs and food distributions, sanitation infrastructure and equipment, water supply, dissemination of weather alerts.</p> <p><u>Construction of 2 camps/sites:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 at GITAZA Bujumbura Rural with 141 HH with 869 people (Familial tents donation of Chinese Red Cross) 18 latrines and 18 bathroom and a bladder of 10.000litres and 4 hand wash infrastructures. • 1 at CASHI RUMONGE Province new one end of construction planned this week of 24 temporary shelter of 16m*6m (96M2) with the capacity of 5 household. The total will 859 people. 	<p>BRCS: existing stocks IOM: shelter, WFP: food, Norwegian Red Cross: support to cholera prevention IFRC: Watsan and NFI kits + surge support to be deployed to support BRCS under the Complex Emergency</p> <p>Belgian Red Cross French Section: financial support to complete the budget requested: woods, nails, etc. Norwegian Church Aid : construction material for latrines and bathroom: cement, iron sheets, nails, plastic pipeline (PVC) iron bars and one water tank of 5.000litres.</p>

<p>Ethiopia</p>	<p>Drought and Food Insecurity</p>	<p>Over 8.2 Million people in need of aid as of November 2015 mostly in Afar and Somali regions</p>	<p>Slow onset</p>	<p>ERCS: Assessment in Afar and Somali region focusing on WASH, Livelihoods and Food Security Distribution of supplementary food Distribution of NFIs in Afar and Somali regions Launched an Emergency Appeal on 4th January 2016. The Appeal will support ERCS to deliver assistance and support to 35,371 people with focus on health, water and sanitation, food security and livelihood.</p>	<p>ERCS : Existing Emergency Response Resources IFRC : launched an Emergency Appeal : deployed a FACT mission to support ERCS and define the exact needs, develop an appropriate relevant plan and budget for the response, HR surge team included: Finnish RC (FACT Health), Austrian RC(FACT WATSAN),IFRC(FACT Food Security) and Iceland RC (FACT Livelihoods) ICRC : NFIs + ERCS in discussions with ICRC to provide punctual support to Tigray and possibly Oromia Iceland RC: contribution to assessment and development of the appeal Swedish RC: Supporting the purchase of animal fodder for beneficiaries in Enderta woreda (Tigray Region) and in Harshin woreda (Somali Region) Netherlands RC:</p>
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					Emergency health, focussing on supplementary feedings, carry out community based screening and referrals of malnutrition cases, and hygiene promotion Finnish RC: HR Surge, FACT + supported ERCS to make an application to ECHO
Kenya	Heavy rain caused: Floods and Landslides, road accidents, lightning strikes, increase of disease outbreak (malaria, cholera etc.)	<p>* Overload on Health care system, affecting access to Critical health care services.</p> <p>* 112 deaths and 73 injuries</p> <p>* A total 40,121 HHs affected (approximately 240,726 people)</p> <p>* 17, 254HHs displaced (approximately 103, 524 people)</p> <p>As of December 17th</p> <p>Affected regions: Western Kenya, parts of Rift valley, Central highlands including Nairobi, parts of Southeastern lowlands, and the Coastal region</p>	October – December 2015	<p>KRCS:</p> <p>* Assessments (including Kenya Inter-Agency Rapid Assessments, KIRA)</p> <p>* Early warning messages to communities living in hazard prone areas using TERA SMS platform: over 4m people reached through Airtel and Safaricom networks.</p> <p>* Evacuation of populations at risk to safe sites, Search and rescue efforts (including evacuation of marooned families with motor boats),</p> <p>* Distribution of NFIs and WATSAN kits reaching 11,791HHs</p> <p>* Distribution of foodstuffs WFP targeting 77, 234 people in Tana River County and Garissa county</p> <p>* Provision of medical outreach services to affected families</p>	<p>KRCS: Existing resources</p> <p>British RC: NFIs and seeds distribution</p> <p>IFRC: Watsan kits + DREF launched on 25th December 2015, to respond to the relief, health, water, sanitation and hygiene needs of 75,000 people in Garissa, Kilifi and Tana River counties</p> <p>ICRC: stock pre-positioning</p> <p>WFP: food</p>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * KRCS also supported communities to benefit from the positive impact of EL Nino by distributing seeds for early maturing crops to 21,000 HHs in Kitui county 	
Somalia	<p>Cyclones Megh and Chapala</p> <p>Flooding in South-Central Somalia</p>	<p>Livestock deaths, destruction of Infrastructure and Property in Puntland. 3 children have been killed.</p> <p>Displacement, destruction/loss of assets, infrastructure and crops, AWD/cholera outbreaks, etc.</p>	<p>8th November 2015</p> <p>From October 2015 onwards (ongoing)</p>	<p>SRCS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Assessment. * Water treatment using limestone and aqua tabs plus community sensitization on use of clean and safe water. * Shelter interventions. * NFIs distribution. *Radio campaigns about cholera prevention <p>SRCS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Assessment of branch response capacity *Volunteer mobilization *With ICRC, joint mapping and prioritization of flood prone areas in 7 regions of South-Central Somalia *All SRCS clinics supported by ICRC in South-Central ready to respond to emergencies in flood-prone areas *Radio campaign about cholera 	<p>IFRC: A DREF operation for cyclone Chapala was launched on 14 November 2015 for CHF 27,823 focusing response in assessments and distribution of shelter and NFI kits.</p> <p>German RC: leading a consortium of PNS to apply for the Horn of Africa El Nino EDF for Somaliland</p> <p>ICRC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Guide and support SRCS response in all aspects of the operation *Prepositioning of assistance *Mobilization/identification of additional logistics assets *Training of SRCS on rapid assessment and reporting,

	AWD/Cholera outbreak in Kismayo and Baidoa		From December 2015 onwards (ongoing)	<p>prevention</p> <p>*Joint distribution of 312,500 sandbags</p> <p>*Joint distribution of food and NFI to 2'703 households in Middle Shabelle</p> <p>*Joint cash distribution for 1'950 households in Hiraan</p> <p>SRCS:</p> <p>*Hygiene promotion and mass jerry can cleaning for 4,869 IDP households</p> <p>*Joint distribution of highly chlorinated water to all IDPs camps and pastoral drop out households + distribution of aquatabs, ORS, zinc tablets + well chlorination</p> <p>*Hygiene promotion activity to start in Baidoa asap with 21 SRCS volunteers</p>	<p>food security and nutrition, water and sanitation, health, RFL and dead body management, operational coordination and security</p> <p>*Further assessments planned in some drought/conflict affected areas</p> <p>ICRC:</p> <p>*Guide and support SRCS response in all aspects of the operation</p> <p>*Support Kismayo and Baidoa hospitals in managing the crisis (donation of drugs, training, setting up of isolation, etc.)</p> <p>*Training of SRCS volunteers in Kismayo and Baidoa for hygiene promotion/cholera</p> <p>*Coordination with other actors</p>
Sudan	Heavy rains causing flooding	In Red Sea State: 3 deaths, 2 injuries, 20 livestock deaths. 4115 affected household detailed as follows; 2727 totally damaged and 1389	3 rd December 2015	<p>SRCS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid assessment • Support to the flood affected in Red Sea (TOKER) by Emergency 	ICRC

		partially damaged. 145 latrines and 31 shops damaged.		household item (NFI) to 500 families. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response Coordination with humanitarian community leading sectors and Government of Sudan HAC and concern ministries. 	
Uganda	Heavy rains causing flooding and landslides	More than 870 HH affected by floods or landslides in all 4 regions (north, East, South, West) of the country. As of 22 nd December 2015.	November and December 2015	URCS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Assessment * Distribution of NFI kits * Distribution of Watsan kits 	ICRC: 400 NFIs to support 400 HHs of the most affected in Bundibugyo and Ntoroko districts. ICRC made a cash contribution of CHF 3000 to support covering costs related to warehousing, transportation, and HR allowances. German RC: Euros 13,000 Disaster Preparedness Fund through a National Emergency Appeal to support 687 most affected HHs in Katakwi and Abim districts with NFIs distribution IFRC: Deployment of RDRT to conduct an assessment in the areas affected by floods and mudslides Belgium RC: Watsan kits

						Norwegian NFIs	Embassy:
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Gaps and challenges:

- ✓ Preparedness activities planned by the National Societies remained largely unfunded (both community awareness/risk reduction and response preparation activities)
- ✓ Current gaps in response concerns financial or in kind support for provision of shelter and disease control services, and for NFIs and Watsan kits.

Notes:

- ✓ For detailed preparedness activities, please check previous updates (Regional Seasonal Forecast Updates Number 1 up to 6).
- ✓ The countries which are not listed in the above table have not reported any significant event in relation to El Nino phenomenon.

Acronyms:

DREF: Disaster Relief Emergency Fund

FACT: Field Assessment Coordination Team

HH: Households

ICRC: International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

IFRC: International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

IOM: International Organization for Migration

IPC: Integrated Food Security Phase Classification.

NFIs: Non- Food Items

NS: National Society

RDRT: Regional Disaster Response Teams

THE ROLE OF THE IFRC East Africa and Indian Ocean Islands regional OFFICE (EAIOI)

The IFRC EAIOI Operations and DRM teams, supported by the FS, WASH, HD, Community Engagement and RM units, and by the DM units of Africa and Geneva offices, are combining resources to support the National Societies at risk of El Niño, as well as those already affected by El Niño and/or by other emergencies like cholera, population movement and food security.

This complex situation is handled with a mid-term perspective, considering that most current crisis will continue for many months and that the devastating effect of El Niño might be followed by additional damages and losses if a La Nina phenomenon materializes this year.

The support in El Niño preparedness activities is continuing in line with the information shared in the El Niño update 4. In summary, the IFRC EAIOI supported the National Societies with:

- stock-prepositioning and with financial resources to implement preparedness activities, by reallocating existing resources
- technical support on risk analysis and early actions, in developing contingency plan
- resources mobilization through mapping of existing resources, communication with regular sharing of updates, dissemination of key messages and coordination

The support in responding to the overlapping current crisis is ensured with the following approach:

- **Surge technical and HR support** is provided for:
 - o assessment of complex situation or of medium scale disaster, for the development of emergency plans of actions through RDRT and FACT
 - o implementation of emergency response through RDRT and ERU
- **Support in resources mobilization** is ensured at **country level** by:
 - o encouraging discussion between country based partners and senior management of the National Societies for the reallocation of existing funds to meet the current preparedness and/or response needs
 - o activation of DREFs
 - o activation of Emergency Appeals
- **Support in resources mobilization** is ensured at **regional level** by:
 - o Sharing regular updates on current risks and ongoing disasters and crisis in the region
 - o Sharing regular updates on activities and efforts currently put in place by the National Societies
 - o Sharing regular updates on current needs and gaps
 - o Communicating on the evolving level of risk
- **Advocacy and external engagement**

KEY MESSAGES

National Societies in the region together with IFRC have been at the forefront of the Early Warning Early Action agenda since 2011, to change our collective approach in order to manage risks rather than crises (**Invest now, save later**). Prior the IGAD consultative meeting of Member States on El Niño and early action, held on the 20th and 21st October 2015, in Naivasha,

Eight National Societies⁹ got together and agreed on five key recommendations to bring collectively to the meeting:

- **Invest in risk management rather than late response:** four years ago, governments and humanitarian community committed to stop slow onset emergency, and to invest more in early actions and risk management to prevent large scale crisis. Four years later, gains and investments that have been made are about to fail. Without action to scale up early actions and preparedness now, there is a risk of relapse. As we learned in 2011, not heeding the warning signs of crisis in already fragile communities can lead to tragedy, and we are already very late.
- **Addressing chronic disasters and vulnerabilities is a development issue and requires long term development funding and planning- incentives for early actions:** incentives matter and are rarely aligned with a system wide objective of preventing crisis. As providers of resources, donors have the power to bring changes in the aid architecture, for example by demanding that agencies include early action plans in development programmes, or that response plans are jointly developed and owned between local authorities/ governments, humanitarian and development actors.
- **Invest at community and local/national level** into local and national capacities that can sustain locally owned work in the years to come
- **Critical to plan for the coming 18 to 24 months, considering a potential La Nina in 2016-** it is possible that this El Niño event will be followed by La Nina next year. Such a scenario would worsen the humanitarian impact of El Niño in the region. It is therefore crucial to plan ahead considering the after El Niño , thinking about medium term ways to address the coming seasons.
- **Ensure community engagement and dissemination of appropriate warnings and advice on preparedness and early actions** to undertake using media, social media, radio and mobile technologies

The current humanitarian and development architecture is not conducive for early actions and it is critical that we collectively act to ensure that challenges and bureaucracy are overcome and to ensure political will. IFRC will continue to actively lead this agenda and engage in relevant regional fora to bring these urgently needed changes in our approach.

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⁹ Burundi Red Cross, Ethiopia Red Cross, Kenya Red Cross, Somalia Red Crescent, South Sudan Red Crescent, Sudan RC Red Crescent, Tanzania Red Cross, Uganda Red Cross.