

Alert

Ethiopia

La Niña and Indian Ocean Negative Dipole-Induced drought

Nairobi, 13 February, 2017

1. Brief description of the emergency and impact

After the El Niño weather phenomenon that severely affected Ethiopia and left 10.2 million people in need of emergency assistance in 2015/16, Ethiopia is once again subject to severe weather conditions causing the failure of the Hageya/Deyr rains (fall rain) in the southern and eastern rainfall belt. The severe water shortages resulting from negative Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) induced drought have caused high numbers of livestock deaths due to lack of pasture and high rate of disease. The Ethiopian Government with its humanitarian partners have issued the Humanitarian Requirement Document (HRD) in mid-January 2017 and declared that a total 5.6 million people are in need of urgent assistance. A total of USD 948 million has been requested.

2. Why is an ACT response needed?

This drought occurred when people and livestock were still suffering from the effects of insufficient March 2016 rains. With the total failure of the fall rains to date coupled with predictions that the Spring 2017 will be well below normal (FEWSNET JAN 17), the Southern regions of the rainfall belt will have faced three consecutive failed rains; creating an emergency situation matching, if not exceeding, the 2011 Horn of Africa drought or even rivalling the devastating 2000 drought. Already thousands of people and livestock are migrating to neighbouring regions in search of water and pasture; in and of itself a distress sign and a negative coping mechanism and exposing themselves to conflict over scarce resources with populations in neighbouring regions (LWF Regional Coordination Office JAN 2017). NCA in collaboration with its Norwegian based NGOs consortium and grass-root level local implementing partners has made a monitoring visit (between 11-13 January 2017) in Siti and Faffan Zones to see the results of ongoing response and identify un-met needs. During the entry meeting, discussion was made with the Somali Region DPPB representative and found that the situation in seven zones except Sitti and Fafan is very catastrophic. The same holds true for Borena and East Hararghe Zones hot spot priority one Woredas.

3. National and international response

Most organizations are on the ground addressing the 2015-6 El Niño-induced drought however are lacking resources to scale up their operations and response to this new drought. The Ethiopian Government has so far pledged an initial USD 47.35 million leading the emergency response. The situation is slowly getting attention and the overall response is gaining traction with both the Government and the international community with the presence of the UN High level delegation led by the UN Secretary General Mr Antonio Gutiérrez and the Emergency Relief Coordinator and Under Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs Mr.

Stephen O'Brien went to Addis Ababa to discuss the current situation with the Government as well as its humanitarian partners on 29 January 2017.

4. ACT Alliance response

Members of the ACT Alliance Ethiopia Forum (AAEF) are currently responding to the 2015-16 El Niño-induced drought and are preparing to mobilise additional resources and/or diverting scarce resources to meet urgent needs.

5. Planned activities

The response will target the Afar, Oromia and Somali and Southern Peoples Nations and Nationalities regional states that are the most affected in this new drought and where most requesting an implementing partners have existing presence and capabilities. The proposed preliminary activities are categorized as life-saving activities such as: the provision of drinking water for people and livestock, provision of water treatment chemicals, the rehabilitation of water supply infrastructure, NFI support, hygiene and sanitation, animal feed, veterinary services, destocking, nutrition, health and protection.

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