



Press Release

EL NINO IMPACT IN EASTERN AFRICA CONTINUES TO REQUIRE HIGHEST LEVEL OF INVESTMENT IN PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

(Nairobi, 23 December 2015): The El Nino global climatic event has since May been the major driver of new humanitarian needs in the Horn of Africa region. Enhanced rainfall continues in parts of Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda, and persistent drought has been reported in parts of Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan, northern Uganda and in the north-western and north-eastern parts of Somalia.

About 300,000 people remain displaced in the flood-affected countries and more than 100 people have died of flood-related situations in Kenya. Nearly two million people in the region remain at risk of being affected by flooding. The number of people facing food insecurity in the region has increased by 64 percent since August; from 11.3 million to 18.5 million people, who are in urgent need of assistance.

Heeding the early warning alert issued by the Climatic Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) in August, national governments and partners reinforced contingency and response plans and scaled-up prepositioning of aid supplies and conducting early animal vaccinations in hotspot areas. Ethiopia has launched a humanitarian requirements document for USD1.4 billion, while Kenya and Somalia have funding needs of \$15 million and \$30 million respectively.

The Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Ambassador Mahboub Maalim, congratulated member states and regional partners in eastern Africa for their efforts towards mitigating the impact of El Nino, and meeting the needs of affected people.

“Resilience programmes at both national and regional level have been immense and countries are better prepared than they were five years ago; although more still needs to be done to mitigate the impact, especially in drought-affected areas,” said Amb. Mahboub.

The humanitarian impact of the El Nino event in eastern Africa is likely to last well into 2016, threatening the regional development and resilience gains, as it comes against a backdrop of a wider humanitarian crisis. The geographic confluence of sustained conflict levels; localized economic shocks particularly in South Sudan continue to exacerbate humanitarian needs.

“This underscores the need to plan and resource for recovery from both floods and drought now and particularly to consider reorientation of existing resilience programming investments and to increase funding to both short-term response needs and resilience interventions,” said Mr. Pete Manfield, OCHA Head of Office for Eastern Africa.

For further information, please contact:

Ms. Truphosa Anjichi-Kodumbe, OCHA Eastern Africa, Tel +254 722 839182, anjichi@un.org OR
Dr. Guleid A. Artan, Ph.D. Director, IGAD Climate Prediction & Applications Centre, Tel: +254-20-3514426