

Timor-Leste: El Niño Impact

UN Resident Coordinator's Office Situation Report No. 2
As of 29 April 2016



This report is prepared by the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Timor-Leste in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period from 18 March 2016 to 29 April 2016.

Highlights

- Based on recent assessment results, 4 municipalities and 1 Special Economic Zone (ZEESM) have been identified as worst affected by El Niño: Covalima, Lautem, Viqueque, Baucau, and Oe-cusse. 120,000 people are severely affected in these locations, where the total population is 400,000 people.
- On 12 April, the Council of Ministers (CoM) was last updated on the impacts caused by the climatic phenomenon by the Minister of Interior, who coordinates the in-country response and facilitates exchange of information.
- The Government has identified 6-7 warehouses in the most affected areas, which will be stocked with food supplies through a coordinated approach by 10 Government Ministries, led by Ministry of Interior.
- After the last HCT meeting on 1 April 2016, the UN Resident Coordinator's Office, in coordination with the Ministry of Interior and the HCT, has developed an Emergency Response Plan (ERP) to outline the problems, possible response interventions and timeframe for action. Overall funding requirement for the response is estimated at USD 25 million.

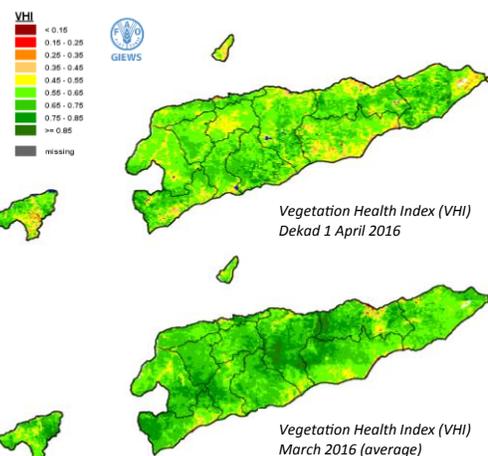


Situation Overview

In early April, especially north coast locations such as Oe-cusse and Atauro received very little rain. Some good rains were received along the south coast. This may enable more maize planting in the south of the country. It is likely that the total planting area of rice will be less than normal. A number of farmers still have not started cultivating their land. (Seeds of Life (SoL) report 15 April)

In March, the rainfall pattern brought sufficient rainfall in the mountains but insufficient or patchy rainfall along the coast. Oe-cusse and Viqueque received very low rainfall with only 42% and 50% respectively of average March rainfall. In Viqueque, rice fields had only been established in one administrative post by end of March. (SoL report 31 March)

FAO satellite images show coastal areas' poor vegetation conditions in March 2016, where VHI values were between 0.15 and 0.55 in worst affected areas. VHI values for April Dekad 1 are comparatively lower across the country, with lowest values in Viqueque, Baucau, Covalima, Lautem, Oe-cusse due to a continued stress caused by drought in these coastal areas.



Note: The boundaries and the names shown and the designations used on these maps do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

The situation causes continued dependence by the rural population on coping mechanisms. This includes eating less, changing primary water sources, selling assets and/or borrowing money. The use of these coping strategies is not sustainable and leads to further health and nutrition problems as well as accelerated depletion of livelihoods. (*CLEAR and HPA Assessment results*)

Humanitarian Preparedness & Response

Based on recently completed assessments, the Government and HCT have identified the 5 worst affected areas: Lautem, Viqueque, Baucau, Covalima and Oe-cusse, where 120,000 people are severely affected. The UN Resident Coordinator Office in Timor-Leste in close collaboration with the HCT and the Ministry of Interior, finalized an *Emergency Response Plan (ERP)* on 19 April. The ERP includes: a problem statement, scope of intervention and timeframe to alleviate the El Niño impact in the 5 worst affected areas. WASH, Food, Nutrition, Health, Livelihoods and Education are highlighted as most urgent areas of response. The estimated funding requirement for response is \$25 million.

The table highlights the most severe problems that are prevalent in the worst affected areas:

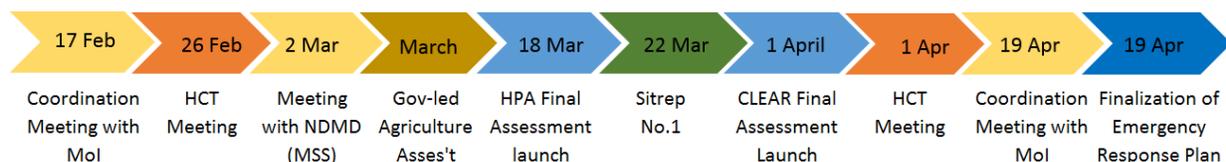
Cluster	Problems	Most affected municipalities/ Special Economic Zone
WATER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced quantity of water for drinking and household use Lack of clean protected water sources Lack of clean water for hygiene Lack of clean water for HH level Occurrence of disputes over water due to water shortage 	COVALIMA LAUTEM VIQUEQUE BAUCAU OE-CUSSE (Special Economic Zone)
FOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of food Restricted diets and disruption of normal food sources Reduction of number of meals Lack of sufficient food stock at HH level Less than normal yield from crops 	
NUTRITION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> El Niño likely to elevate malnutrition 	
HEALTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased cases of skin rashes due to lack of water Increased diarrhea cases due to use of unprotected water sources 	
LIVELIHOODS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delay in planting due lack of rain Stressed or failed crops due to lack of rain and/or inconsistent rain Low seed stocks due to crop failures and/or multiple planting Loss of livestock due to sickness or death 	
EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of water at schools Lack of school feeding programs 	

The Government is preparing to provide emergency food security support in the coming months and has identified state warehouses in the relevant municipalities. Criteria have been proposed to ensure that food assistance is distributed to those communities and households most in need. (*Govt press release 7 April*). The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Environment purchased 9,000 tons of rice from abroad (*CoM 12 April*). MCIE (through NLC) has distributed 1,200 tons of rice to several Administrative Posts intended for market price intervention. (STL Newspaper, 22 April 2016, page 6)

The following matrix provides an overview of four recently completed assessments and on-going monitoring activities by a wide range of actors:

Organization/s	Type	Name	Location	Status
Ministry of Interior & the HCT	Assessment	Rapid Needs Assessment	Liquiçá	Completed Dec 2015
Ministry of Interior & WFP, Ministry of Social Solidarity, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries	Assessment	Consolidated Livelihood Exercise for Analyzing Resilience (CLEAR)	Country-wide	Published April '16
Humanitarian Partnership Agreement (HPA): CARE, PLAN, OXFAM, World Vision	Assessment	Multi-sectoral, household surveys & focus group discussion	19 Aldeias in 8 municipalities	Published 18 March 2016
Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries & FAO, CRS, Mercy Corps	Assessment	Rapid Agriculture Assessment	Country-wide (402 Sucos)	Completed April 2016
Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, Seeds of Life project	Monitoring	El Niño Crop Monitoring Report	Country-wide (442 Sucos)	Available every 2 weeks
FAO	Monitoring	Satellite monitoring (GIEWS)	Country-wide	Available every dekad

General Coordination



The Minister of Interior coordinates the in-country response and facilitates exchange of information. The Council of Ministers deliberated on El Niño on a number of occasions. On 12 April, the Council of Ministers was last updated on the impacts caused by the climatic phenomenon by the Minister of Interior. Currently, 10 line ministries are directly involved in the response planning. (*CoM press release 12 April*)

Humanitarian partners' support is coordinated through the HCT which is co-led by the Minister of Interior, the Minister for Social Solidarity, the UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC) and Plan International's Country Director. HCT meetings take place regularly and facilitate information sharing. The last meeting took place on 1 April 2016. UN OCHA has deployed one stand-by partner to support the UN RC Office on coordination and information management.

The Prime Minister's Office together with UN agencies and humanitarian partners continue to carry out the nation-wide public information campaign. Posters, radio programs and TV talk shows are used to convey key messages and raise awareness about El Niño.

Funding

All humanitarian partners, including donors and recipient agencies, are encouraged to inform the UN Resident Coordinator's Office of cash and in-kind contributions. Please email any information to adelina.lourdes@one.un.org

DISCLAIMER: This document is a compilation of information gathered from various sources, including relevant UN agencies, Government sources, INGOs, IOs, church-based organizations and the media.

For further information, please contact

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Please visit www.hct-timorleste.com to assess information on the humanitarian situation in Timor-Leste, and be updated about upcoming events and activities.

For more information, visit www.unocha.org www.unocha.org/el-nino www.reliefweb.int