



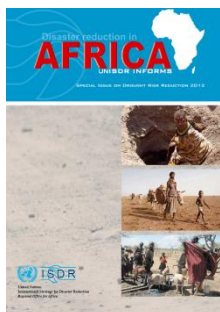
Africa-Asia Drought Risk Management Peer Assistance Network



May 2012 Issue

Special Topic

Disaster Reduction in Africa - UNISDR Informs: Special Issue on Drought Risk Reduction 2012



UNISDR Informs is a publication produced periodically by United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN-ISDR) Secretariat's Regional Offices to share updates, ongoing campaigns, national platform activities, lessons learnt and general news information on disaster risk reduction in the region. 2012 special issue of Africa Informs looks at drought risk reduction through the lens of the Hyogo Framework of Action, the global framework for disaster risk reduction. It features the excellent work being done throughout the African region and underscores the necessary holistic approach to achieve better resilience to drought in the future.

The 2010/2011 drought, which affected the Horn of Africa, was not unexpected. Indications of the drought conditions were received as early as September 2010. The question posed over and over again is: Why was there no early action following the early warning? There are many conflicting professional opinions circling around answering this question. The fourth Africa Drought Adaptation Forum, organized by UN-ISDR Regional Office for Africa and the UNDP DDC Office in October 2011 discussed key gaps affecting the long-term drought adaptation and mitigation efforts in the Horn of Africa with experts, government officials and community members from the Africa as well as from Asia and Europe.

Building on this discussion, the issue focuses on the themes of:

- Institutionalization of drought risk reduction, legislation, policy and planning;
- Drought early warning, drought risk and vulnerability mapping including data Collection;
- Building capacity for drought risk reduction;
- Improving access to Services in drought prone areas;
- Drought preparedness, contingency planning, contingency funding, early action measures; and
- Coordination and partnership for drought risk reduction.

The full publication is available for download at http://www.preventionweb.net/files/26438_isdrafricainformsspecialissue_sondro.pdf.

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About AADP

Africa-Asia Drought Risk Peer Assistance Network (AADP) is a network established under the *Africa-Asia Drought Risk Management Peer Assistance Project*. The project is designed to mitigate the risks of drought and improve human livelihoods in Africa and Asia by creating an enabling environment for inter-regional knowledge sharing among drought-prone countries and facilitating the up-scaling of proven drought risk management (DRM) practices.

AADP provides the DRM practitioners and policymakers with a variety of peer learning and capacity development support to, based on their priorities, operational gaps and capacity needs, building on the pool of experiences and expertise of the ongoing [African Drought Risk and Development Network initiative \(ADDN\)](#).

The project is funded by the Government of Japan and implemented by the UNDP Drylands Development Centre.

For more information, please visit the [AADP project website](#).

Knowledge Resources and Networking Opportunities

Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia



The Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia (RIMES) is an international and intergovernmental institution, owned and managed by its 13 Member States and 18 Collaborating Countries, for the generation and application of early warning information. RIMES evolved from the efforts of countries in Africa and Asia, in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, to establish a regional early warning system within a multi-hazard framework for the generation and communication of early warning information, and capacity building for preparedness and response to trans-boundary hazards. Established in 2009, RIMES operates from its regional Early Warning Center located at the campus of the Asian Institute of Technology in Pathumthani, Thailand.

Drought is one of the key water related hazards RIMES's early warning and capacity enhancement services focus on. The timely forecasting of drought and effective risk assessment enables vulnerable communities to prepare mitigation strategies, thus limiting the extent of losses. At RIMES, a drought early warning system (DEWS) is being adapted to identify climate and water supply trends in order to detect the probability and potential severity of drought. The process involves trend mapping that can reveal underlying causes of vulnerability. An example of where the maps can be useful is in identifying areas with poor water management strategies and irrigation practices. This information, if delivered to decision makers in a timely and appropriate format, can reduce the impact of droughts given that mitigation actions and preparedness plans are in place. More information on RIMES drought related services will be available in the future.

Please visit <http://www.rimes.int/> for further details regarding RIMES and the services and resources provided by the system.

AlertNet

AlertNet

A THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION SERVICE

AlertNet is a free humanitarian news service run by Thomson Reuters Foundation covering crises worldwide. AlertNet's award-winning website provides trusted news and information on natural disasters, conflicts, refugees, hunger, diseases and climate change. It is for anybody concerned with human suffering: relief workers, donors, policymakers, researchers, students, journalists and the general public. The site attracts upwards of 12 million visitors a year.

AlertNet covers dozens of emergencies on all continents, including many of the "forgotten" crises that rarely make mainstream headlines. It deals with sudden disasters like earthquakes and hurricanes as well as slow-burning, complex emergencies such as drought, internal conflicts and food crises, with special focus on low- or medium-income countries which likely to find that their capacity to handle large emergencies depends on international assistance. Visit AlertNet's Crisis Centre at <http://www.trust.org/alertnet/crisis-centre/> to explore humanitarian themes and find news, background, contacts and other resources on current crises

The cornerstone of the AlertNet community is the AlertNet membership. Members are non-discriminatory, non-profit civil society organisations that are actively involved in emergency relief. There are currently nearly 500 AlertNet member

NGOs from 95 countries worldwide. Benefits for members include access to free Reuters pictures for use in emergency appeals and opportunities to reach new audiences by publishing news, pictures and video directly onto AlertNet. Members can also post jobs and engage with media professionals worldwide through our Who works where directory.

Please visit <http://www.trust.org/alertnet/> for more information regarding the AlertNet.

Sahel and West Africa Club

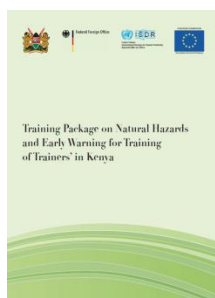


The Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC) is a group of West African regional organisations, countries and international organisations that work together towards the development and integration of the West African region. The Club's mission is to pool together Members' experiences, ideas and perspectives to help build more effective regional policies. Drawing on factual studies and independent analyses, the Club devises strategic guidelines and policy tools for Members and other stakeholders. The Club is also a space for policy dialogue. As a member of the Development Cluster of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the SWAC Secretariat contributes to the work of the Organisation (OECD) and ensures that West African concerns and initiatives are taken into account in global debates, particularly those on food, energy and security issues.

Among other themes, food security has been at the heart of the Club's founding mission to raise international support for and awareness of the drought crises in the Sahel. Among the key achievements are the creation of the Food Crisis Prevention Network and the adoption of the Food Aid Charter. Over the years, the SWAC has produced various analyses, policy notes, information notes, etc. and facilitated regional policies. Another key work area of the SWAC is climate change. International policymaking has over recent years placed climate variability/change impacts as a key threat to state and global stability. The Security Implications of Climate Change in the Sahel Project combined climate, historical, geographical and socio-economic research to analyse the relation between climate change and security in the Sahel, a region that is considered particularly vulnerable and that is gaining increasing attention due to security, energy and broader geopolitical interests.

Please visit http://www.oecd.org/pages/0,3417,en_38233741_38242551_1_1_1_1_1,00.html for more information on the SWAC.

Training Package on Natural Hazards and Early Warning for Training of Trainers' in Kenya



Natural hazards training package herein also referred to as a 'training toolkit' is developed by the Kenya National Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Platform through the Ministry of State for Special Programmes with technical and financial support from UN-ISDR and the Government of Germany. The overall aim of the training package is to increase awareness on natural hazards and DRR to key stakeholders with knowledge on disaster management to empower the actors to support their organizations in developing disaster resilient programs and projects.

This package is for use in DRR training aimed at building the capacity of sub national government officials, NGOs, academia and other actors responsible for delivering, implementing, planning,

researching or coordinating programs/policies and projects by raising awareness on DRR issues. The knowledge shared through this toolkit will help participants increase their knowledge of preparedness; response, recovery, rehabilitation and development projects/ programs that incorporate DRR concerns.

Training methods adopted by the training course include: power point presentations; group discussions; group exercises; supplementary hand-outs; and review sessions. The course is structured in nine modules. Module 3 of the manual focuses on drought hazard in Kenya. This module will highlight the typology of droughts in Kenya, temporal and spatial distribution and causes of drought. It will also focus on drought mitigation, prevention and risk reduction measures. The module will have four sessions.

Please full training package is available for download at
http://www.unisdr.org/files/26445_trainingpackageonnaturalhazardslow.pdf.

Event and Training Opportunities

International Workshop on Drought Monitoring, Assessing and Planning under Global Climate Change (Beijing, China; June 3-5, 2012)



UNITED NATIONS
Office for Outer Space Affairs



International Workshop on Drought Monitoring, Assessing and Planning under Global Climate Change will be co-organized by the

UN Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response, U.S. National Drought Mitigation Center, International Center for Drought Risk Reduction and University of Nebraska-Lincoln on June 3-5, 2012, in Beijing, China. Drought is one of the major natural hazard threats to people's livelihoods and community socio-economic development. Each year, disasters originating from prolonged drought not only affect tens of millions of people, but also cause serious social, economic, environmental, and political problems in both the developing countries and developed countries. Many countries have recently experienced severe droughts, with the consequence of loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, loss of livelihoods and services, social and economic disruption, or environmental damage. Along with increasing water demands and the uncertainty associated with climate change, drought is expected to be a serious long-term global challenge.

The workshop will provide an opportunity to present the findings and to share the experiences on the drought related research for the scientists from different countries and organizations. The topics discussed at the workshop include: drought monitoring and forecasting; drought mitigation and planning; drought risk and impact assessment; space technology on drought reduction; and latest initiatives for drought research. The language of this workshop will be English.

For further details regarding the workshop, please visit <http://www.adrem.org.cn/dmapgcc/>.

2012 World Day to Combat Desertification (Worldwide; June 17, 2012)



The World Day to Combat Desertification has been observed every year on 17 June since 1995 to promote public awareness relating to international cooperation to combat desertification and the effects of drought, and the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). The Day can be celebrated through organizing activities such as seminars, media events and campaigns. This year, the Day's slogan is "Healthy soil sustains your life: LET'S GO LAND-DEGRADATION NEUTRAL".

The world's most significant non-renewable resource is fertile soil, which is the peel of productive land. Nevertheless, each year 12 million ha of land, the area three times the size of Switzerland, are lost due to desertification. Land degradation directly affects 1.5 billion people globally. Soil is key for securing water, energy and building resilience to short-term climate variability, including drought, and long-term climate change. Therefore, the international community needs to take urgent action in order to avoid the increasing loss of land. To this end, this year's World Day to Combat Desertification will highlight the efforts required to secure the long-term sustainable land management. Zero-net land degradation can be achieved when, over a given period of time, non-degraded land remains healthy, and already degraded-land is restored. Such approach can ensure food security, alleviate rural poverty and hunger and build resistance to major environmental challenges. Successful practices for attaining the zero-net land degradation in drylands could be then effectively adapted and adopted in non-drylands. This is further elaborated in the concept note and press release provided.

For more information about the Day, please visit <http://www.unccd.int/en/programmes/Event-and-campaigns/WDCD/Pages/WDCD2012.aspx>. Please contact UNCCD Secretariat at secretariat@unccd.int for your country plans to mark the Day. The information received will be posted on the UNCCD website.

Gordon Research Conference on Salt & Water Stress in Plants (Hong Kong, China; June 24-29, 2012)



Drought and salinity cause serious global crop losses. Dramatic progress has been made over recent years at identifying individual biological mechanisms, genes and networks that are required for plant survival under abiotic stress. The emerging main challenges are to obtain an understanding of how these processes are coordinated within the plant, identification of many still unknown key players and genes and how different environmental stresses and their signaling pathways are integrated into an overall response. In addition to invited speakers, the organizers have left many open slots for talks to be selected from submitted abstracts and applications, further ensuring that late breaking developments and important fields will be widely represented.

This conference will bring together world class scientists from universities, research institutes, field stations and industries from all over the world to present and discuss their latest research achievements. 2012 Gordon Research Conference on Salt and Water Stress in Plants will focus on new breakthroughs and advances in understanding stress reception, signal transduction, ion and water homeostasis, advanced molecular plant breeding, metabolism, systems level genomic and signaling network mechanisms, quantitative genetics, protein modifications, intracellular trafficking, control of gene expression as well as whole-plant physiology. The conference will further address the key question of how information gained in reference plant model systems, such as *Arabidopsis*, can be transferred to crop plants, and how fundamental knowledge can be translated into long-term strategies for improved stress tolerance in the field towards providing food and green energy production for the growing world population.

Applications for this meeting must be submitted by May 27, 2012. For more information on the conference and the registration, please visit <http://www.grc.org/programs.aspx?year=2012&program=salt>.

Employment and Grant Opportunities

Call for Experts to Participate in the UNCCD Ad Hoc Working Group – UNCCD Secretariat (Closing Date: May 10, 2012)



The secretariat of the UNCCD is herewith inviting experts to apply to become and act as members of the Ad Hoc Working Group to further discuss the options for the provision of Scientific Advice focusing on desertification/land degradation and drought issues (AGSA). At its tenth session held in Changwon, Republic of Korea in October 2011, the Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD acknowledged the need to mobilize scientific and technical expertise to address the problems of desertification/land degradation and to mitigate the effects of drought. The AGSA will aim at analyzing those options and at proposing the most suitable components that would shape an integrated scenario for providing scientific advice to the UNCCD focusing on desertification/land degradation and drought issues, for consideration by the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) at its eleventh session.

The public call for candidature opens on 12 April 2011 and will end on 10 May 2012, 2400hrs CET. Candidates fulfilling the competence requirements and wishing to be considered as a member of the AGSA are invited to apply and shall:

- 1) read and agree to the Terms of Reference of the AGSA, which stipulates the modalities of work, conditions for membership and compensation; and
- 2) submit the application form and copy of their Curriculum Vitae.

The selection process will be conducted by the CST Bureau with the support of the UNCCD secretariat based on applications submitted in response to this public call. Names of selected individuals will be posted on the UNCCD website. For more information regarding the AGSA, please visit

<http://www.unccd.int/en/programmes/Science/International-Scientific-Advice/Pages/Call-for-experts.aspx?HighlightID=75>.

Post-Doctoral Fellow Positions – Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics (Closing Date: May 18, 2012)



At the Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics (ACPFPG) our scientists are improving wheat and barley's tolerance to environmental stresses such as drought, heat, salinity and nutrient toxicities. These stresses known as abiotic stresses, are a major cause of yield and quality loss throughout the world and cause significant problems for cereal growers. ACPFG seeking a total of 11 Post-Doctoral Fellows most of whom will work on an ACPFG/Pioneer DuPont project. The project focuses on advanced cereal breeding through molecular markers,

discovery research for agronomic traits and hybrid seed production in wheat as well as on agronomic traits to increase drought tolerance and decrease the need for soil-applied nitrogen fertilizer in leading production crops, including corn, soybeans, canola, rice and sorghum. Some of the positions include:

- Post-doctoral fellow/research fellow (drought): S/He joins a multi-disciplinary team focused on improving drought responses of cereals under a range of scenarios where water limits yield. This specific position is on a component of the drought program focusing on the discovery and evaluation of transcription factors, to improve drought tolerance.
- Post-doctoral fellow/research fellow (drought genetics): The drought genetics program of ACPFG aims to identify mechanisms and genes underlying the tolerance to drought in wheat and barley. Using genomics, genetics and plant physiology, the Post-Doctoral Fellow will conduct research to support fine mapping and candidate gene identification at target loci controlling yield components under drought.

More information on ACPFG and further details on the post-doctoral fellow/research fellow positions are available at <http://www.acpfg.com.au/index.php?id=80>.

Policy Officer, Climate Change – African Union (Closing Date: May 30, 2012)



The African Union, established as a unique Pan African continental body, is charged with spearheading Africa's rapid integration and sustainable development by promoting unity, solidarity, cohesion and cooperation among the peoples of Africa and African States as well as developing a New Partnership Worldwide. Towards these objectives, the African Union seeks to fill the vacant position of the Climate Change and Desertification Unit in the Directorate of Rural Economy and Agriculture. Specifically, the Job holder shall perform various tasks, which include, among others:

- Assist in formulation of appropriate strategies, policies and plans of action related to climate change and desertification control in Africa;
- Build awareness on climate change issues in Africa, promote and support the development of African common positions on climate change and support project implementation on adaptation and mitigation actions;
- Assist in the coordination of various efforts on climate change and desertification, ensuring linkages and synergies with complementarities of different initiatives, sectors and collaborations, liaising with Member States, RECs, and relevant Stakeholders including International Organizations, Development Partners;
- Ensure the development of a Resource Mobilization Strategy with donor coordination for Climate Change;
- Ensure networking and facilitation of peer reviews, information sharing and exchange; and
- Promote studies and researches on local indigenized technologies on mitigation and adaptation measures to climate change in Africa including increased participation of Africa Member States in global carbon market as well as foster collaboration among Member States to combat drought and desertification.

Please visit <http://www.aucareers.org/viewvacancy.aspx?id=110> for more information on the position and the application procedure.



Drought Risk Management: Practitioner's Perspectives from Africa and Asia (2012)

This report reviewed the current institutional and programmatic landscape in the realm of drought risk management (DRM) in the two regions and mapped out some of the main DRM capacity gaps and gap-filling opportunities. The exercise is based upon the consultations with key individuals in both continents, an online survey of some 400 practitioners working in drought-related fields and focused discussions at the First Africa-Asia Drought Adaptation Forum held in Bangkok, Thailand, in June 2011. It highlighted important similarities in DRM issues across Africa and Asia and identified priority areas to which the inter-regional south-south cooperation could add value.

The full publication and the issue brief are both available for download at:

http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/environment-energy/sustainable_land_management/drought-risk-management-from-africa-and-asia.html.



Mainstreaming Drought Risk Management: A Primer / Intégration de la Gestion du Risqué de Sécheresse: Manuel introductif (2011)

The overall purpose of this Primer is to provide a basic roadmap for mainstreaming drought risk reduction concepts and practices into development planning and programming at different levels. It outlines a stepwise approach to define the drought risks within a given context. It also presents a methodology for translating the risk assessments and metrics into specific policy measures, planning instruments and measurable interventions.

The full publication is available for download at:

<http://www.undp.org/drylands/docs/Mainstreaming%20DRM-English.pdf> (English)

<http://www.undp.org/drylands/docs/Mainstreaming%20DRM-French.pdf> (French)

Useful Links on Drought Status Updates

Africa

African Centre of Meteorological Application for Development: <http://www.acmad.ne/index.htm>

Experimental African Drought Monitor: http://hydrology.princeton.edu/~justin/research/project_global_monitor/

Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) Africa: <http://www.fews.net/Pages/default.aspx>

Food Security & Nutrition Working Group Update: <http://www.disasterriskreduction.net/east-central-africa/fsnwg/drought>

IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC): <http://www.icpac.net/Forecasts/forecasts.html>

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) Africa: <http://www.irinnews.org/IRIN-Africa.aspx>

Prevention Web Africa: <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/countries/africa/>

Relief Web Africa: <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc115?OpenForm&rc=1>

Southern African Development Community (SADC) Climate Service Centre: <http://www.sadc.int/english/regional-integration/is/csc/>

UNOCHA (Southern & East Africa): <http://ochaonline.un.org/rosea/LatestUpdates/tabid/6652/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

UNOCHA (West & Central Africa): <http://ochaonline.un.org/Bulletinshumanitaires/tabid/3099/language/fr-FR/Default.aspx>

Asia

Asian Disaster Reduction Center: <http://www.adrc.asia/latest/index.php>

East Asian Drought Monitoring System: <http://atmos.pknu.ac.kr/~intra2>

FEWS NET Central Asia: <http://www.fews.net/Pages/default.aspx>

IRIN Asia: <http://www.irinnews.org/IRIN-Asia.aspx>

Pacific Disaster Center/World Natural Hazards Website: <http://www.pdc.org/iweb/pdchome.html>

Prevention Web Asia: <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/countries/asia/>

Relief Web Asia: <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc115?OpenForm&rc=3>

SAARC South Asian Disaster Knowledge Network Weekly Disaster News: <http://www.saarc-sadkn.org/about.aspx>