Anticipatory Action Activation

Somalia

World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
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Key facts

Location: Beletweyene, BuloBurto, Baardheere, Luuq, Jowhar/Mahaday, Jalalaqsi, and Afgooye districts	
Number of people supported with Early Warning Messages	442,209
Number of people supported with anticipatory cash transfer	218,718

Anticipatory actions to mitigate El Nino's flood impact in Somalia

In October 2023, the World Food Programme (WFP) with the Somali Disaster Management Agency (SoDMA), successfully implemented an Anticipatory Action (AA) activation, designed to safeguard the lives and livelihoods of people in anticipation of floods across seven districts in Somalia, namely Beletweyne, Bulo Burto, Jalalaqsi, Jowhar/Mahaday, Baardhere, Luuq and Afgooye.

Forecasts at both regional and national levels indicated an elevated risk of above-average rainfall due to the ongoing El Nino phenomenon. This raised concerns about substantial flooding, particularly in the Horn of Africa during the October to December 2023 (deyr) rainfall season. The situation posed a significant threat to the 1.6 million people living in the riverine communities along Jubba and Shabelle rivers, and to the 1.5 million hectares flood-prone land.

The Anticipatory Action Plan developed earlier in 2023, set triggers thresholds based on river risk levels (4.5 to 7.5 meters) established by the Somalia Water and Land Information Management's Flood and Response Information Management System (SWALIM - FRRIMS). The IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Center (ICPAC) monitored forecasts daily through the Geospatial Streamflow Forecast Model, informing the AA activation when triggers were met.

In September 2023, minimal preparedness actions began, focusing on community engagement, households' targeting and registration, especially involving minority groups, and the development of early warning messages. On October 10th, the flood forecast indicated that the trigger for readiness and activation of anticipatory action would be reached within 10 days in the target districts.

From October 12th to October 24th, approved anticipatory actions were implemented:

- Dissemination of Early Warning Messages (EWM) to 442,209 people through loudspeakers and radio broadcasts. SoDMA augmented this effort with an automated flood early warning message for all mobile

phone users. All messages were translated into the local language to enhance people's understanding and prompt action. The messages aimed at informing households about the possible risk from floods, giving them 1) guidance on flood risk reduction measures, 2) what to do during the flood and 3) recovery measures and advice on preventing future damage.

- Distribution of unconditional anticipatory cash transfers to 218,718 people who were most vulnerable to the floods. USD 81 per household was provided to meet basic food needs and other priority needs to reduce floods impacts. Out of the people reached with cash, 59% were women, enhancing their involvement in decision making.

- Strategic pre-positioning of nutrition commodities and boats to ensure efficient delivery of essential food and nutrition assistance to potentially flood-affected communities.

The actions were aimed at 1) increasing the awareness and access to timely and useful early warning information and advisories related to floods, 2) maintaining improved food and nutrition consumption status, and 3) incurring minimal damage/loss of lives.

This proactive and collaborative implementation has been made possible through the multi-year funding and investment in Anticipatory Action systems by the Government of Germany. With a total cost of USD 4,194,924, this activation empowers targeted communities to make informed decisions, enabling them to mitigate the impact of floods and protect both their lives and livelihoods.

Photo page 1: WFP/ Petroc Wilton

AA Activation—October 2023