

# **DROUGHT CONDITIONS AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN THE GAMBIA**

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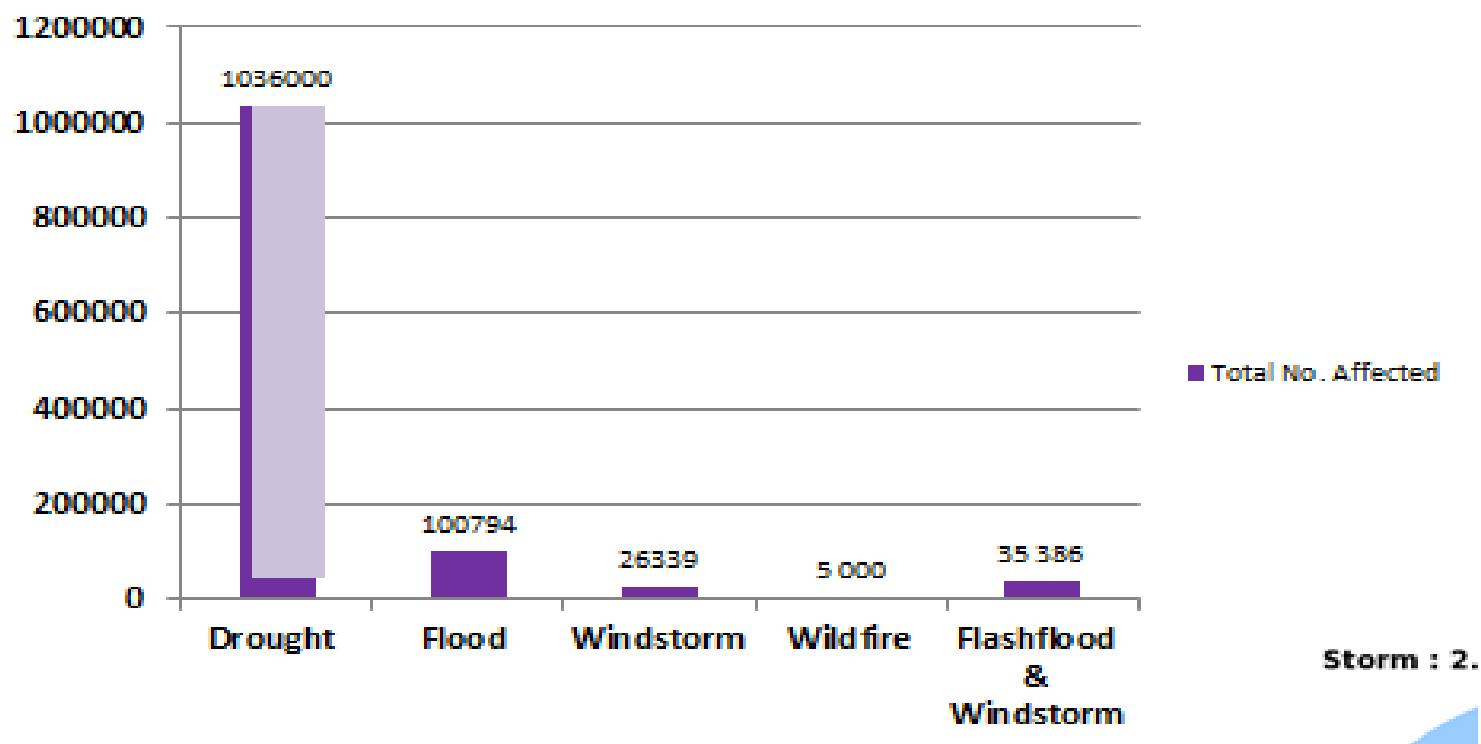
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# 1968-2012 Natural Hazards in The Gambia



# **DROUGHT MONITORING AND EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS**

- **In order to mitigate the effects of drought, it is important that farmers are aware of risks that they are exposed to.**
- **They can contribute to reduction of losses by choosing less sensitive crops in case the drought is developing already**
- **DROUGHT MONITORING SYSTEM**
  - **Seasonal Forecast**
  - **Early Warning Bulletin for Food Security in The Gambia**
  - **Daily Weather Forecast Bulletin**

# VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

- **According to records of past drought impacts, it is generally accepted that agriculture is by far most vulnerable sector.**
- **Other possible vulnerabilities (tourism, water resources etc.) were not yet studied since in most cases they mitigate impacts by themselves.**
- **This situation might change, mainly in light of climate change and will need future attention. However, at present situation, vulnerability to drought is mainly attributed to farmers**

# **EMERGENCY RELIEF AND DROUGHT RESPONSE**

- **In 2011, late, erratic and unevenly distributed rainfall resulted in a significant decline in the agricultural production in The Gambia.**
- **A joint post-harvest assessment led by the Ministry of Agriculture and WFP, conducted in 2011, estimated that 520,000 people were affected by the drought.**
- **Overall the crop production was estimated to have dropped by 62% compared to 2010 and by 50% compared to the five year average.**
- **Out of the thirty-nine districts of The Gambia, twenty-five were affected by crop failure; nineteen were classified as most affected indicating that their incomes are dependent on agricultural activities and that they did not have sufficient income from other sources. Six districts were classified as borderline affected implying that they were indirectly affected by the drought.**
- **Within the context of coordinating drought response, the National Disaster Management Governing Council (NDGC) is the overarching body for emergency response and preparedness activities.**
- **The National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) coordinates and monitors the implementation of drought response.**
- **Regional Disaster Management Committee (RDMC) which is composed of key partners in disaster management at the regional level.**
- **The work of the RDMC is decentralised in every district through a District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC).**

## **PRACTICES TO ALLEVIATE DROUGHT IMPACTS**

- **Mainly advanced agricultural practices – promotion of irrigation**
- **Apart from irrigation, other practices (mainly optimization of selected cultures including diversification and optimization of other practices such as optimal ploughing, application of shade nets etc.).**

## **THE NEED FOR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ON DROUGHT MANAGEMENT**

- **The need for knowledge and skills in drought management is informed by challenges encountered and lessons learned mostly during drought response planning and implementation.**
- **There is a need to enhance the national capacity in the area of early warning especially in the highly technical field of meteorology which faces a critical shortage of skilled and experienced staffs.**
- **The other areas that also require more capacity are logistics, information management and water provision.**

# Thanks