

# **THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF DROUGHT AND FRAGILITY IN THE HORN OF AFRICA**

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# **Drought - Recurring problem, climate the main root cause.**

2010/11 Drought - Horn of Africa.

“Following two seasons of average to above-average rainfall, the 2010 Deyr/Short rains (Oct-Dec) were extremely poor across the region’s eastern sector, with rainfall totals less than 30 percent of average in many areas of southern Ethiopia, central/southern Somalia, and eastern/northern Kenya. January/February harvests completely failed in most cropping areas. In pastoral areas, poor rainfall limited both sheep/goat conceptions and pasture growth in key grazing areas. Serious water shortages are ongoing.”

- Fews Net - February 23, 2011

# 2016/17 Drought – Horn of Africa.

"A severe drought, related to La Niña and warm West Pacific sea surface temperatures, significantly impacted rainfall performance during the 2016 October to December season across the Horn of Africa. This drought greatly limited crop production and pastoral resource regeneration. In Somalia in particular, food security impacts are expected to be severe. "

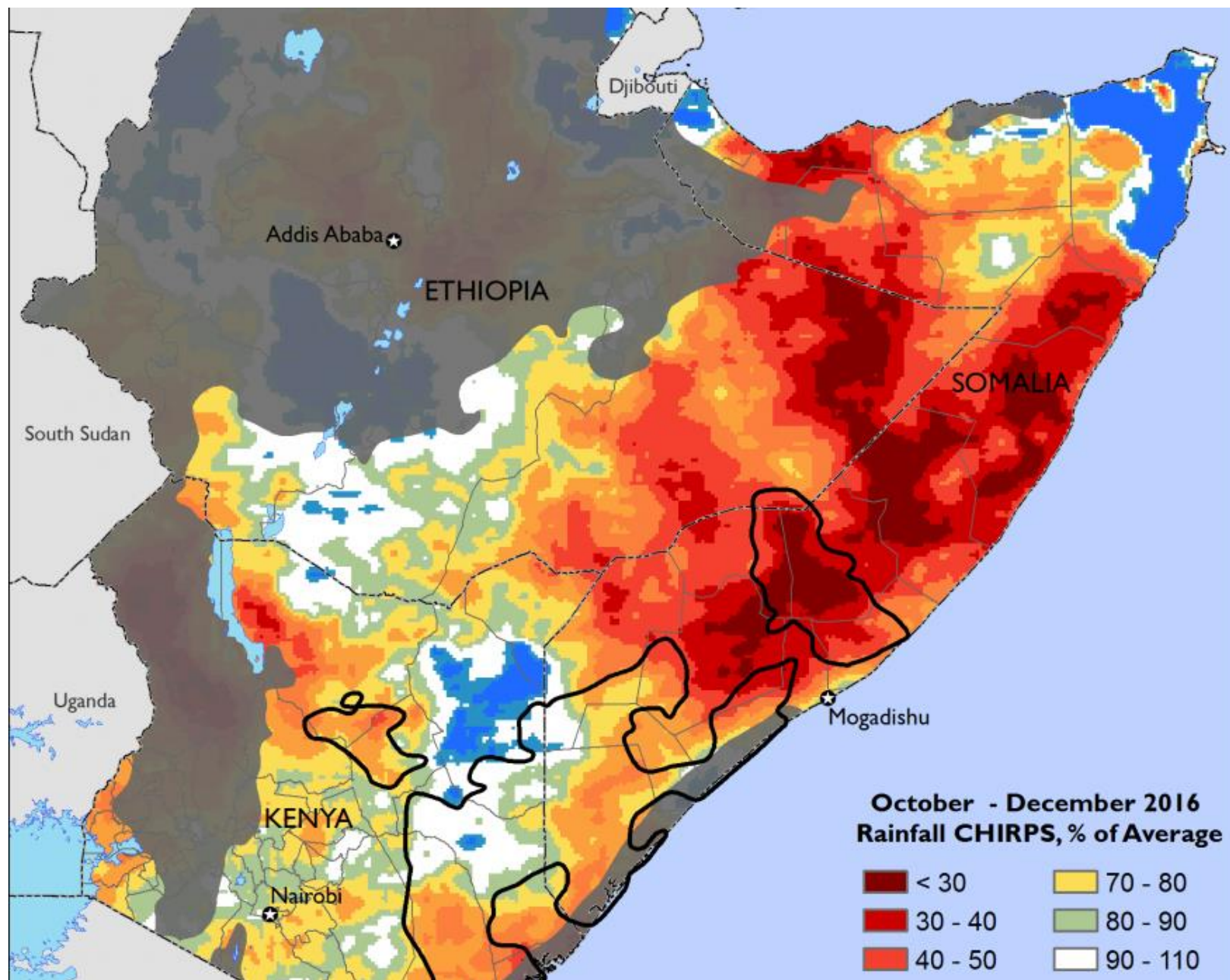
Fewsnet - February 3, 2017

# Accelerating Drought episodes?

- 1972–1973,
- 1983–1984,
- 1991–1992,
- 1999–2002,
- 2010–2011,
- 2016/17
- 2020??
- Most drought areas overlap with conflict. Is there a correlation?

# Underlying causes of Droughts/ Famines

- Climate - Complex natural phenomenon
  - La Niña
- Underdevelopment (governance issue)- Poverty, Lack of basic services
- Environment degradation - Land use changes
- Limited options – livelihoods, markets
- Insecurity – exposure to conflict.
- Dependence on rain-fed Agriculture



October to December 2016 rainfall anomaly (% of the 1981-2010 average) Source: FEWS NET/USGS CHIRPS





# Droughts and conflicts in the Horn.



# Droughts and conflicts in the Horn.

- Fights over scarce resources – Laikipia, Tana River, Turkana, Baringo areas in Kenya. Somalia and Southern Ethiopia, South Sudan.
- Feeling of neglect and marginalization – Sudan (South/ North), Ethiopia – 1974, Kenya.
- Small arms – Cattle rustling,
- Terrorism
- Focus on war and less on development – Somalia
- Mines and unexploded ordinances – Ethiopia/ Eritrea, Somalia
- Refugees/ Migrations – Away from farms/ burden to host communities.



# Impacts

- Loss of life – estimated 260,000 in Somalia in 2010/11.
- Crop failures, food shortages - famine in many regions
- Malnutrition, health issues
- Mass migration – resource related conflicts
- Damage to the environment - major cause of land degradation, aridity and desertification.
- Loss of community livelihoods
- Severe economic impacts – diversion of development budget to humanitarian response.
- Marginalization

# What can be done to break the cycle?

- Past evidence clearly shows that the African continent is likely to face extreme and widespread droughts in future.
- Aggravating factors - slow progress in drought risk management; increased population and demand for water and degradation of land and environment; slow conflict resolution progress
- “Look upstream” – President Kim.
- Need for increased and integrated efforts in drought mitigation to reduce the negative impacts of droughts anticipated in the future.

Tana River in Kenya- Permanent River. Can its waters be tapped to resolve water problems in most parts of Northern and Eastern Kenya?



1. Photo by The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.
2. Internal Map of the World (UTA) derivative work: Svenskan - Based on File:Kenya topographic map-de.svg



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# What can be done?

- Early Warning/ Early Action
- Governance - Basic services / infrastructure development.
- Country/ regional/ international security/ peace initiatives.
- Scaling up options – Water, Agriculture, livelihoods.
- Shift/ changes in main livelihoods?
- Environment Investment Programs
- Risk insurance.
- Research