

# **REPORT OF THE SECOND CONFLICT EARLY WARNING EXPERTS' MEETING**

**27 FEBRUARY 2008  
IMPERIAL BOTANICAL GARDEN HOTEL  
ENTEBBE, UGANDA**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The second conflict early warning experts' meeting was held at the Imperial Botanical Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2008. It was a follow up to the first conflict early warning experts' meeting held at the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) in Nairobi, Kenya on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2007. The main objective of the meeting was to review the progress following the Nairobi meeting. Specifically, the meeting aimed at refining the climate needs of CEWARN and to see if these needs are being met currently, finding out the impediments to CEWARN usage of climate information, sharing success stories/experiences in the use of climate information in planning, and defining the Way Forward for the next three years.

The meeting was held alongside the 21<sup>st</sup> Climate Outlook Forum (COF 21) activities, which also included Food security Outlook, Malaria Outlook, Media and Socio-economic benefits workshops. It was preceded by a joint opening ceremony that was attended by all participants to COF 21. The opening ceremony was presided over by Mr. Stephen Magezi, the Commissioner of Meteorology and Permanent Representative with WMO, Uganda.

Participants from Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda, including International partners attended the meeting. The participants were mainly Disaster Managers and Meteorologists. The meeting was divided into four sessions. Session I was intended to explore environmental and related information needs for conflict early warning. Session II was for integrated climate risk management information needs for conflict early warning, while Session III was to look at development and testing of sample products for conflict early warning. The last session was for the development of the Way Forward.

A number of important recommendations emerged from the meeting, including:

- A concrete binding link should be established between CEWARN and ICPAC
- The CEWARN national focal points should establish binding linkages with the national meteorological services
- Meteorological services should continue to expand their capacity building activities for the users of their products and develop tailor-made products for conflict early warning users
- Meteorological services and conflict early warning experts should engage in participatory research to provide evidence on the benefits of using climate information in national / regional security and conflict early warning experts
- CEWARN, ICPAC, and IGAD should work with the National governments to mainstream climate information into contingency plans, policies and legal frameworks to contribute to efforts for the reduction of national / regional security and conflicts
- Meteorological services, in collaboration with partners, should improve the station coverage in the remote arid and semi-arid regions where climate stresses are key triggers of many conflicts
- ICPAC, CEWARN and partners should implement the use of remote sensing data to augment the Meteorological services data to enhance monitoring of weather/climate for conflict early warning

- Need for capacity building of the climate and conflict nearly warning experts to develop relevant indicators and work plan for collaborations at national and regional levels
- It was noted that COFs are held by ICPAC regularly every three months. It was agreed that a meeting of CEWARN and ICPAC experts should take advantage of the COFs to develop and test new climate related products for enhancing conflict early warning

I wish to sincerely thank everyone, including all the development partners and ICPAC member states for making the meeting a success in one way or the other.

Prof. Laban A Ogallo  
Director  
IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

The Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) is an initiative of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) designed to serve the IGAD region as a mechanism that systematically anticipates and responds to violent conflicts in a timely and effective manner. CEWARN held an experts meeting at the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) in Nairobi, Kenya on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2007 whose overall objective was to identify the information needs of CEWARN and how best the institution can collaborate with other institutions so as to work effectively.

It has been observed that most of the conflicts in the IGAD region occur as a result of climate stress resulting in serious competition over resources. Therefore the meeting in Nairobi was to chart out the best way that CEWARN activities can be enhanced through the integration of products from ICPAC and other climate-related institutions.

This is the report of the second meeting held in Imperial Botanical Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

### **1.2 Objective of the Meeting**

The specific objectives of the meeting were as follows:

- Refining the climate needs of CEWARN and to see if these needs are being met currently
- Find out what impediments are there to CEWAN usage of climate information
- Share success stories/experiences in the use of climate information in planning
- Define the Way Forward for the next three years
  - What can ICPAC and CEWARN do together?

### **1.3 Date and Venue of the Meeting**

The workshop was held on 27<sup>th</sup> February in Imperial Botanical Garden Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda alongside the 21<sup>st</sup> Climate Outlook Forum (COF 21).

### **1.4 Participants**

Due to last-minute unavoidable circumstances, the CEWARN experts from their headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia could not attend the meeting. However, they sent a representative, Mr. Joseph Muhumuza, CEWARN focal person, Uganda to the meeting. Other participants consisted mainly of Disaster Managers and Meteorologists. A total of twelve participants from Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, including International partners attended the meeting. The full list of participants is in Annex II.

## **2. PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING**

The meeting was held as part of COF 21 activities, which also included Food security Outlook, Malaria Outlook, Media and Socio-economic benefits workshops. It was preceded by a joint opening ceremony that was attended by all participants to COF 21. The opening ceremony was presided over by Mr. Stephen Magezi, the Commissioner of Meteorology and Permanent Representative of Uganda with WMO. The ceremony was also addressed by Prof. Laban Ogallo, Director ICPAC, Dr. Everline Komotunga representing the Users, Ms. Judy Omumbo representing IRI and Mr. Victor Simango representing WMO.

The meeting was conducted in a highly interactive manner with participants freely expressing their opinions. It was divided into four sessions. Session I was intended to explore environmental and related information needs for conflict early warning. Session II was for integrated climate risk management information needs for conflict early warning, while Session III was to look at development and testing of sample products for conflict early warning. The last session was for the development of the Way Forward. The draft agenda for the meeting can be found in Annex I.

At the beginning of the meeting, the report of the First Meeting that was held in Nairobi was tabled and discussed. However due to the absence of some key people, the participants decided to replace the program with one in line with the Terms of Reference given in the plenary after the opening session. The revised agenda was:

- What are the climate needs
  - Are they being met today?
  - If not, why?
- Success stories/experiences
- Why is climate information not being used?
- Way Forward for the next three years
  - What can we do together?

### **2.1. Climate Needs**

A brief overview of CWARN was given by Mr. Muhumuza. He indicated that CEWARN is currently operational in two semi-arid clusters, the Karamoja cluster mainly in Uganda, and the Somali cluster extending through parts of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. They have field monitors who administer regular questionnaires as a means of collecting data.

It was noted that most conflicts in these clusters arise from water issues. There are frequent droughts and occasional floods. Droughts often deplete the grazing areas of these pastoral communities resulting in fierce competition for the little available. The good rains that follow the droughts also enhance the conflicts since the browse progressively improve with some regions getting better first. The climate information necessary to alleviate this problem includes:

- Timely seasonal forecasts
- Onset and cessation of seasons
- Distribution of rains within the season

However, these needs are currently not being met. CEWARN relies on traditional indigenous knowledge for seasonal forecasts. The meeting observed that the CEWARN country representatives currently have no direct links to the national meteorological service, at least in

Uganda. It was also noted that there are no meteorological operational stations in the cluster regions. This may make the forecasts ineffective for the regions.

## **2.2. Impediments to the use of climate information**

The meeting deliberated on the possible reasons why the climate information is not currently being fully utilized in planning. The inadequate communication infrastructure was cited as one major impediment. Passing of the information from the meteorological services to the end user is not smooth. The recipients often do not have the capacity to access the information as disseminated, usually through radios, televisions or newspapers. The result is that the users of the information often do not get the information.

The other impediment is the lack of awareness on the available products from the climate community. The field implementers of the most projects do not know what relevant products are available to them from the meteorological community. This problem is compounded by what was referred to as the “invincibility” of Meteorological service – the field operatives who know of some of the products may not know how to get in touch with them. The services seem a little detached from the communities, since they only operate from their headquarters. They do not have officers close to the communities who can easily be approached for advice and assistance.

Of major concern to the participants was the problem of interpreting the products. The format and language of presentation of the product is challenging to most users. This renders the products almost useless. There is a general lack of tailor-made products to meet specific needs resulting from weak networking and collaboration between the meteorological services and some end-users.

User’s perception of the forecast is also a major impediment in the utilization of the climate information in planning. There is a general belief that the forecasts are inaccurate. This arises partly from the reporting of the forecasts, which group together very wide areas leading to expectations that are not met, and partly to inadequate station coverage of remote areas, especially the arid and semi-arid pastoral areas that may lead to inaccurate forecasts for those areas.

There is also a need for stronger meteorological services that are able to give an unpopular forecast and stand by it, for example, inform communities about early unseasonal rains which should not lead to early planting and insist in conveying the message. Finally, the meeting observed that there is a lack of institutional, policy and legal frameworks to promote the use of climate information in planning, especially for the arid and semi-arid regions.

## **2.3. Success stories/experiences**

Two success stories were narrated to the participants. In Ethiopia the correct and timely seasonal forecast for September – December 2007 rains were given to the government. The season was expected to be very wet with episodes of flooding. The government mobilized resources in time, including the use of the army in timely relocation of people from the flood-prone areas. The result was minimal loss of life damage of property.

Burundi experienced damaging floods during the season September – December 2006. The meteorological service, with funding from FAO, OCHA, WFP and others, worked with ICPAC to develop a flood forecast based on the seasonal forecast for the next season (SOND 2007). This was successfully used in planning for that period.

## 2.4. Way Forward

It was noted that climate lead to disasters, stresses in water, food, forage, etc that often lead to conflicts and insecurity within the IGAD region. The following were the key recommendations that were made on addressing the climate related national and regional conflict / security challenges:

- A concrete binding link should be established between CEWARN and ICPAC
- The CEWARN national focal points should establish binding linkages with the national meteorological services
- Meteorological services should continue to expand their capacity building activities for the users of their products and develop tailor-made products for conflict early warning users
- Meteorological services and conflict early warning experts should engage in participatory research to provide evidence on the benefits of using climate information in national / regional security and conflict early warning experts
- CEWARN, ICPAC, and IGAD should work with the National governments to mainstream climate information into contingency plans, policies and legal frameworks to contribute to efforts for the reduction of national / regional security and conflicts
- Meteorological services, in collaboration with partners, should improve the station coverage in the remote arid and semi-arid regions where climate stresses are key triggers of many conflicts
- ICPAC, CEWARN and partners should implement the use of remote sensing data to augment the Meteorological services data to enhance monitoring of weather/climate for conflict early warning
- Need for capacity building of the climate and conflict nearly warning experts to develop relevant indicators and work plan for collaborations at national and regional levels
- It was noted that COFs are held by ICPAC regularly every three months. It was agreed that a meeting of CEWARN and ICPAC experts should take advantage of the COFs to develop and test new climate related products for enhancing conflict early warning

### **3. ANNEXES**

#### **3.1 Annex I: Draft Agenda for Second Conflict Early Warning Experts' meeting**

##### **Morning Session**

8.00 – 9.00 Registration

9.00 – 10.00 Official Joint Opening

10.00 – 10.15 **Coffee Break**

##### **SESSION 1: ENVIRONMENTAL & RELATED INFORMATION NEEDS FOR CONFLICT EARLY WARNING**

10.15 – 10.25 Purpose of the meeting and report from last meeting of 4 September 2007 - ICPAC

10.25 – 10.30 CEWARN Representative (Betty Abebe)

10.30 – 10.40 Discussions

##### **SESSION 2: INTEGRATED CLIMATE RISK MANAGEMENT INFORMATION NEEDS FOR CONFLICT EARLY WARNING**

10.40 – 10.55 Role of ICPAC

10.55 – 11.10 Role of NMHSs

11.10 – 11.20 Role of Others

11.20 – 11.30 Discussions

##### **SESSION 3: OTHER INFORMATION NEEDS FOR CONFLICT EARLY WARNING**

11.30 – 11.40 Climate Risk management in coping with current climate variability and adaptation to future climate change - ICPAC

11.40 – 11.50 Conflict Indicators: Assessment of Water resources for early warning - TBA

11.50 – 12.00 Food Security – FEWSNET

12.00 – 12.10 Forage – ILRI/LEWS

12.10 – 12.20 Other Environmental Indicators – TBA

12.20 – 12.30 Disaster Management – Johnson Owaro

12.30 – 12.40 Role of remote Sensing, GIS, and other tools for integration of data and other resources for Conflict Early warning. – Dr G. Ouma

12.40 – 12.50 Discussions

##### **SESSION 4: WAY FORWARD**

12.50 – 13.10 Identification of programme of work and time schedule on implementation including mechanism to overcome deficiencies.

Closure of meeting

### 3.2 Annex II: List of Participants

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