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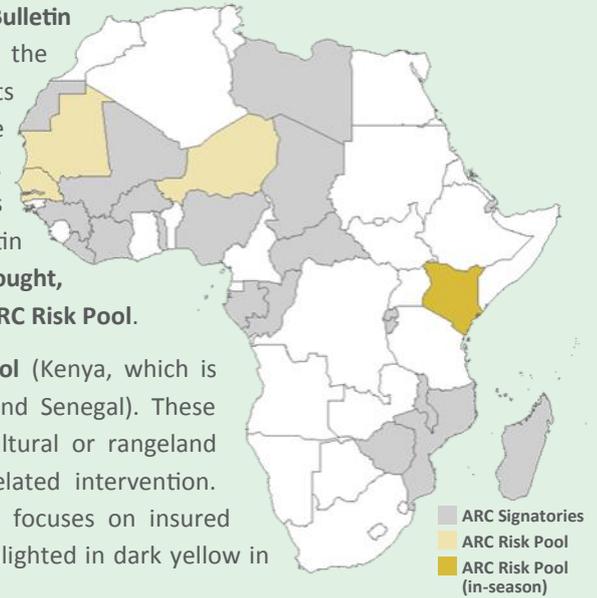
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OVERVIEW:

This month's issue of the *Africa RiskView Bulletin* covers the month of **May 2015**. During the reporting month, the rains continued in parts of **Central Africa** and in **East Africa**. The rainy season intensified in **West Africa**, while the season in **Southern Africa** has come to an end. The *Africa RiskView Bulletin* covers the following topics: **rainfall, drought, populations affected** and updates on the **ARC Risk Pool**.

Four countries form the **first ARC risk pool** (Kenya, which is insuring two seasons, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal). These four countries insured in total five agricultural or rangeland seasons against the cost of a drought-related intervention. This issue of the *Africa RiskView Bulletin* focuses on insured countries that are currently in-season (highlighted in dark yellow in the map).



HIGHLIGHTS:

RAINFALL:

- Wetter than normal conditions in much of **Central Africa** and in **East Africa**, with the exception of southern Ethiopia
- Above average rainfall in the western parts of **West Africa**, with a delayed start of the season in the eastern and northern parts of the region

DROUGHT:

- Above normal rains in April and May have compensated for a delayed start of the season in **Kenya's** pastoral areas

POTENTIALLY AFFECTED POPULATIONS:

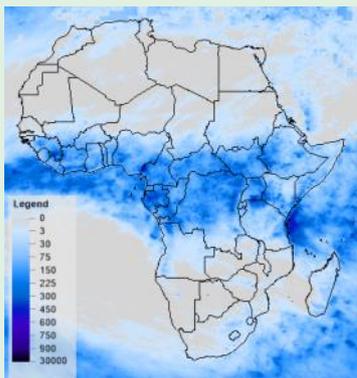
- The current projection for **Kenya** indicates a well below average number of drought-affected people at the end of the 2015 long rains season

INSURANCE:

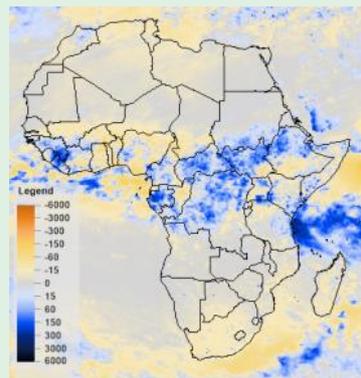
- Four countries (Mauritania, Niger, Kenya and Senegal) form the first ARC risk pool
- Niger, Senegal and Mauritania received pay-outs by the ARC Insurance Company Limited in January 2015

RAINFALL

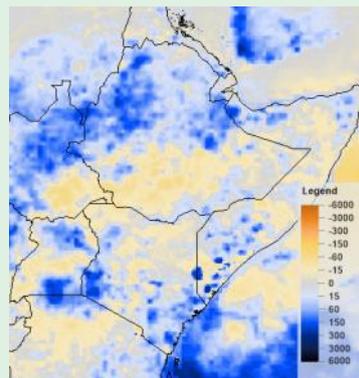
During the reporting month, the rainy season continued in **Central Africa**, a region which receives significant rainfall year-round (see Map 2). The seasonal rains in **East Africa** continued during the month of May 2015, particularly in western Kenya and western Ethiopia, where cumulative rains of over 500 mm were recorded in some areas. Seasonal rainfall continued in coastal areas of **West Africa** and their northward progression continued, with cumulative rains of up to 200 mm in southern Burkina Faso and southern Mali. Finally, in **Southern Africa**, the rainy season came to an end during the reporting month.



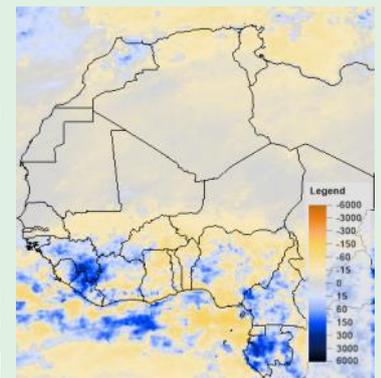
MAP 2: CUMULATIVE RAINFALL, RFE2 (MAY 2015)



MAP 3: RAINFALL COMPARED TO NORMAL, RFE2 (MAY 2015)



MAP 4: RAINFALL COMPARED TO NORMAL, HORN OF AFRICA, RFE2 (MAY 2015)



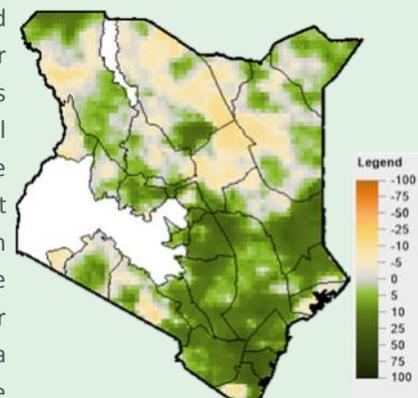
MAP 5: RAINFALL COMPARED TO NORMAL, WEST AFRICA, RFE2 (MAY 2015)

Compared to the long-term average (2001-2014), most of **Central Africa** recorded above normal rains, particularly northern DRC, Central African Republic, Cameroon and Gabon (see Map 3). Drier than normal conditions were observed in north-eastern Congo. In **East Africa**, wetter than normal conditions persisted in most of South Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Somalia and northern Ethiopia. Particularly in north-western Somalia, these rainfall surpluses might alleviate dry conditions in the previous months (see Map 4). However, in southern Ethiopia dry conditions persisted, with rainfall deficits of up to 80 mm in some areas. Finally, in **West Africa**, the western parts of the region, which have a longer and wetter rainy season, recorded rainfall surpluses of up to over 400 mm in some areas of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. On the other hand, the eastern parts of the region, including eastern Ghana, Togo, Benin and parts of Nigeria experienced drier than normal conditions (see Map 5) indicating a slightly delayed season start. This also applies to the southern Sahel, with Mali, Niger and parts of Burkina Faso recording minor rainfall deficits. However, the seasonal rains are expected to increase in intensity over the coming weeks in these areas.

DROUGHT

Africa RiskView uses the **Water Requirements Satisfaction Index (WRSI)** as an **indicator for drought**. The WRSI is an index developed by the *Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)*, which, based on satellite rainfall estimates, calculates whether a particular crop is getting the amount of water it needs at different stages of its development. To maximise the accuracy of *Africa RiskView*, **countries intending to take out insurance customise the software's parameters** to reflect the realities on the ground. This issue of the *Africa RiskView* Bulletin will discuss insured countries that are currently in-season.

Kenya (2015 first rangeland season): Kenya chose to focus on its arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) in the context of its participation in the ARC insurance pool in 2014/15. *Africa RiskView* was customised to show rangeland development in the country's bi-modal pastoral areas. The 2015 long rains started slightly later than normal, and rainfall in February and March 2015 was below normal in most pastoral areas of Kenya, with some localised exceptions. However, well above average rains received in April and May have compensated for this early season dryness in most parts of the country. The current rangeland WRSI is well above the long-term average for the season (2001-2014) in most areas, with the exception of localised areas in Isiolo, Wajir and Marsabit in central and northern Kenya, which are experiencing a slightly below normal season (see Map 6). The situation in these areas needs to be monitored closely given the compounding effect of three consecutive poor rainy seasons between 2013 and 2015, which severely affected pasture regeneration and had a negative impact on pastoral communities in these areas. Nonetheless, the overall impact of the 2015 long rains on the food security situation in Kenya's pastoral areas is expected to be positive, according to [FEWS NET's latest Food Security Outlook Update](#).



MAP 6: RANGELAND WRSI COMPARED TO NORMAL, KENYA (2015 FIRST RANGELAND SEASON)

AFFECTED POPULATIONS

Based on the WRSI calculations discussed in the previous section of this bulletin, *Africa RiskView* estimates the **number of people potentially affected by drought** for each country participating in the insurance pool. As part of the in-country customisation process, **vulnerability profiles** are developed at sub-national levels for each country, which define the potential impact of a drought on the population living in a specific area. It is important to note that not all those affected by a drought might be in need of humanitarian assistance. Moreover, needs are often driven by a variety of factors including but not limited to the weather. This bulletin reviews the drought affected population estimates and projections for countries insured and in-season.

Kenya (2015 first rangeland season): As mentioned above, the 2015 long rains in Kenya performed average to below average in the first part of the season, while above average rains were recorded in April and May 2015. These good rains have compensated for the early season dryness, which is reflected in *Africa RiskView's* population affected estimates. As the graph to the right illustrates, the end-of-season projection generated by the model increased slightly during the first half of the season, but dropped significantly after the good rains in the last two months. Currently, *Africa RiskView's* estimates indicate that the number of people affected by drought at the end of the season will be minimal (see Graph 1). It is important to note, however, that this estimate only looks at the impact of the 2015 long rains season itself, and does not take



GRAPH 1: ESTIMATED POPULATION AFFECTED BY DROUGHT, KENYA (2015 FIRST RANGELAND SEASON)

About ARC:

- The **African Risk Capacity (ARC)** is a specialised agency of the African Union designed to improve the capacity of AU Member States to manage natural disaster risk, adapt to climate change and protect food insecure populations.
- The **Africa RiskView** software is the technical engine of ARC. It uses satellite-based rainfall information to estimate the costs of responding to a drought, which triggers a corresponding insurance pay-out.
- The **ARC Insurance Company Limited** is the commercial affiliate of the ARC Agency, which pools risk across the continent through issuing insurance policies to participating countries.

The **Africa RiskView Bulletin** is a regular publication of the ARC Agency. It provides information about current rainfall and drought index developments as detected by *Africa RiskView*, and their potential impact on vulnerable populations. It also provides updates on the ARC Risk Pool and the estimated response costs, which are the underlying basis of the insurance policies issued by the ARC Insurance Company Limited.

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into account potential carry-over effects of previous seasons. As discussed in the previous issues of the *Africa RiskView* Bulletin, Kenya experienced several consecutive poor rainy seasons between 2013 and 2015. Particularly in the country's arid and semi-arid lands, this has affected pasture regeneration and thus affected vulnerable households in these areas, some of which remain classified in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis), according to FEWS NET's latest Food Security Outlook Update (see link above).

UPDATE ON THE ARC RISK POOL

In a fourth and final step, *Africa RiskView* converts the numbers of affected people into **response costs**. For countries participating in the insurance pool these national response costs are the **underlying basis of the insurance policies**. Pay-outs will be triggered from the ARC Insurance Company Limited to countries where the estimated response cost **at the end of the season** exceeds a pre-defined threshold specified in the insurance contracts. This bulletin will monitor the progression of estimated response costs for countries that are in-season and have insured their respective seasons.

Of the four countries that formed the first ARC Risk Pool in 2014/15, three (Mauritania, Niger and Senegal) received pay-outs by the ARC Insurance Company Limited, due to the poor performance of their respective rainy seasons in 2014. The fourth country, Kenya, insured its two pastoral seasons. Its 2014/15 short rains season ended without the conditions for a pay-out being triggered, and it is highly unlikely that the ongoing **2015 long rains season in Kenya** will result in a pay-out by the ARC Insurance Company Limited.

As mentioned above, **the three West African countries in the first ARC risk pool have received pay-outs by the ARC Insurance Company Limited** in early 2015, due to the poor rainfall performance during their respective 2014 agricultural seasons. The countries are currently implementing the activities outlined in the **Final Implementation Plans (FIPs)**, which were approved by the ARC Agency Governing Board in January. In Mauritania, 50,000 drought affected households were identified for targeted food distributions in the four worst affected regions of the country (Hodh Ech Chargui, Tagant, Gorgol and Brakna). So far, two rounds of food distributions have been completed, while the third is ongoing. In Senegal, procurement of locally produced rice started in March 2015, and the beneficiaries for targeted food distributions have been identified. It is expected that the distributions will start in June. Meanwhile, subsidised livestock feed sales to drought affected pastoralists have started in 14 districts, targeting over 500,000 cattle. Finally, in Niger, vulnerable households in five regions (Tillabéri, Dosso, Maradi, Zinder and Diffa) will benefit from cash transfers and food distributions. The implementation of these programmes will be monitored closely in the coming editions of the *Africa RiskView* Bulletins.

Disclaimer: The data and information contained in this bulletin have been developed for the purposes of, and using the methodology of, *Africa RiskView* and the African Risk Capacity Group. The data in this bulletin is provided to the public for information purposes only, and neither the ARC Agency, the ARC Insurance Company Limited, the World Food Programme nor the donors to the African Risk Capacity Group make any representation or warranty regarding the fitness of the data and information for any particular purpose. In no event shall the ARC Agency, the ARC Insurance Company Limited, the World Food Programme nor the donors to the African Risk Capacity Group be held liable with respect to any subject matter presented here. Pay-outs under insurance policies issued by ARC Insurance Company Limited are calculated using a stand-alone version of *Africa RiskView*, the results of which can differ from those presented here.