

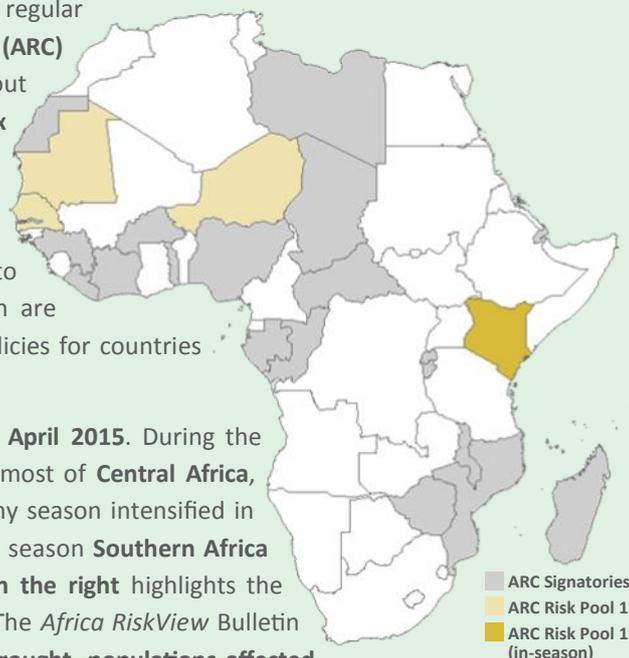
Highlights:

- **Rainfall:**
 - Slightly delayed start of the rainy season in the eastern parts of **West Africa**, and drier than normal conditions in **Ethiopia** and northern **Somalia**
 - Above normal rainfall in **Central Africa** and parts of **East Africa**
- **Drought:**
 - Above normal rainfall in April has compensated for a delayed start of the season in **Kenya** and resulted in above average rangeland WRSI in most pastoral areas
- **Potentially Affected People:**
 - Due to good rains in April, the current projection for **Kenya** indicates a well **below average number of drought-affected people** at the end of the 2015 long rains
- **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, ahead of the 2015 humanitarian appeal for the Sahel

INTRODUCTION

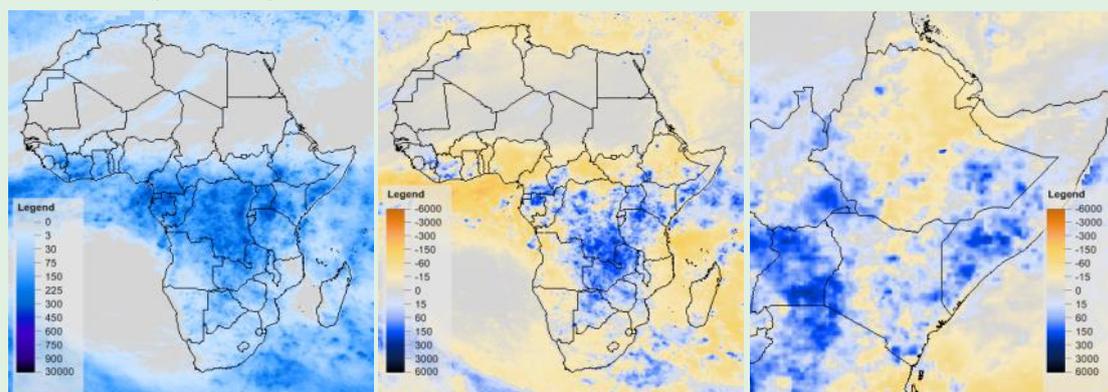
The *Africa RiskView* Bulletin is a regular publication of the **African Risk Capacity (ARC) Agency**. It provides information about current **rainfall and drought index developments** as detected by *Africa RiskView*, and their potential **impact on vulnerable populations**. It also provides updates on **estimated response costs** to assist potentially affected people, which are the underlying basis of the insurance policies for countries participating in the ARC insurance pool.

This month's issue covers the month of **April 2015**. During the reporting month, the rains continued in most of **Central Africa**, which receives year-round rains. The rainy season intensified in **East Africa** and in **West Africa**, while the season **Southern Africa** is slowly coming to an end. The **map on the right** highlights the countries on which this issue will focus. The *Africa RiskView* Bulletin will cover the following topics: **rainfall, drought, populations affected** and update estimates on **response costs**.



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** intensified during the month of April 2015, particularly in western and central Kenya, where cumulative rains of over 300 mm were recorded, as well as southern Somalia and Ethiopia. Seasonal rainfall also picked up in intensity in coastal areas of **West Africa**, and a northward progression of rainfall can be observed, with light rains recorded in the southern parts of Burkina Faso and Mali. Finally, in **Southern Africa**, the rainy season is slowly coming to an end, with light rains along the coast and more heavy rainfall in inland areas (particularly in Botswana, Zimbabwe and Zambia).



MAP 2: CUMULATIVE RAINFALL, RFE2 (APR 2015)

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

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

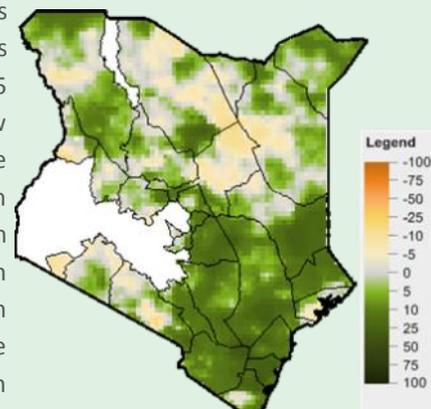
Compared to the long-term average (2001-2014), the central parts of **Southern Africa** experienced a wetter than normal month of April, particularly southern DR Congo, Zambia, Botswana and Zimbabwe (see Map 3). Southern Tanzania, northern Mozambique, Madagascar as well as most of South Africa, Namibia and Angola on the other hand experienced below normal rains during the month. In **West Africa**, countries along the eastern Gulf of Guinea, including Togo, Benin, Nigeria and northern Cameroon, recorded below average rains, which might indicate a slightly delayed start of the season. The same applies to Burkina Faso, although the rainy season in the Sahel usually

intensifies between May and July. In **East Africa**, above normal rains in April 2015 might have compensated for unusually dry conditions in the previous month, particularly in Kenya and southern Somalia (see Map 4). However, most of Ethiopia and north-western Somalia experienced below average rains.

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. *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 during the month of April have compensated for this early season dryness, and the current rangeland WRSI is well above the long-term average (2001-2014) in most parts of the country. Only parts of Isiolo, Wajir and Marsabit in central and northern Kenya are currently experiencing a below average rangeland WRSI (see Map 5). 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 have severely affected pasture regeneration and had a negative impact on pastoral communities in these areas, according to [FEWS NET's latest Food Security Outlook for Kenya](#). Good rains over the coming weeks are thus critical to alleviate the effect of the poor 2014/15 short rains season in the central and northern pastoral areas.

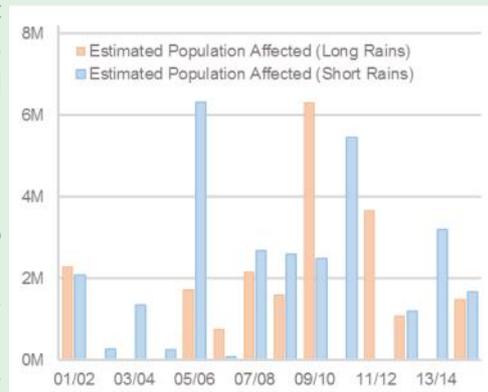


MAP 5: RANGELAND WRSI COMPARED TO NORMAL, KENYA (2015 FIRST RANGELAND SEASON)

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 affected population estimates and projections for countries insured and in-season.

Kenya (2015 first rangeland season): Given the positive impact of the well above normal rains in April 2015 on the rangeland WRSI (see previous section), *Africa RiskView's* end-of-season estimates for Kenya's first rangeland season in 2015 have dropped significantly. *Africa RiskView* currently estimates that only a marginal number of pastoralists in the country's arid and semi-arid lands will be affected at the end of the season in June 2015, assuming that the rains between over the coming two months will be normal. However, it is important to note that this estimate does not take into account any carry-over effects from previous seasons. Considering the mixed performance of the 2014/15 short rains, which have led to localised drought events in most of central and eastern Kenya, as well as the two previous seasons, a good 2015 long rains season might not be sufficient to allow for a full recovery of vulnerable pastoralist communities. While the individual impact of each of these seasons might have been absorbed by the adaptive capacity of households, their resilience might seriously have been affected by the compounding effect of several consecutive poor rainy seasons. The graph to the right illustrates the estimated drought impact for the short and long rains seasons since 2001. It shows how for each of the last three seasons, Kenya has seen between around 1.5 and 3 million people being directly affected by drought conditions (see Graph 1).



GRAPH 1: ESTIMATED POPULATION AFFECTED BY DROUGHT, KENYA (2001-2015)

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 cost 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.

RESPONSE COST ESTIMATION

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. Currently, **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. So far, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal have received pay-outs by the ARC Insurance Company Limited, while the insured short rains season in Kenya recently finished without the country being eligible for a pay-out. Regarding the ongoing **2015 first rangeland season in Kenya**, it is unlikely that the country will receive a pay-out by the ARC Insurance Company Ltd at the end of the season, given the normal to above normal drought index observed currently in most pastoral areas.

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 preparing the implementation of the activities outlined in the **Final Implementation Plans (FIPs)**, which were approved by the ARC Agency Governing Board in January. In Mauritania, targeting of beneficiaries and provision of food distribution cards was completed in March 2015, as discussed in the previous issue of this bulletin. During the reporting month, a first round of food distributions was completed. In Senegal, a targeting exercise is ongoing to identify beneficiaries of food distributions, which are expected to start in May. Meanwhile, cattle feed delivery to drought-affected pastoralists has started. Finally, in Niger, the target areas and implementing partners for cash transfers have been identified and trained. Food commodities suppliers for School Feeding have been selected and the activities are expected to be assisted in the coming weeks. The implementation of these programmes will be monitored closely in the coming editions of the *Africa RiskView* Bulletins.

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