

BASELINE STUDY ON THE USE
OF EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS
AND INTEGRATION OF DATA INTO
POLITICAL PLANNING IN WEST
POKOT AND BARINGO COUNTIES

BMZ SPECIAL INITIATIVE "ONE
WORLD, NO HUNGER"



Konrad
Adenauer
Stiftung

© 2018

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung encourages the use, reproduction and dissemination of material in this publication for private study, research and teaching purposes or for use in non-commercial purposes, provided that appropriate acknowledgement of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung as the source and copyright holder is given. For permission requests, indicate "Permission for "BS/EWS" and address to the following:

1Thigiri Hilltop/off Thigiri Ridge Road
P.O. Box 66471 - 00800
Nairobi/Kenya
Email: info.nairobi@kas.de

Report Compiled by: Jeanette .V. Nyanjom
Reviewed by: Dr. Jan Cernicky and Edwin Ottichilo

A publication of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V., Kenya

Disclaimer

The information and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V., Kenya or her partners. The articles presented are a compilation of inputs from different stakeholders and therefore keen effort has been made to edit this report to the highest standard. However, we highly regret for any typographical or grammatical error(s) that you may still encounter.

Preface

In the Month of February 2018, the KAS conducted a baseline study on the Use of Early Warning Systems and integration of data into political planning in West Pokot and Baringo Counties. Why this study? Firstly, is that there was need to understand the political environment and how it informs the uptake of early warning information; how decisions are made, and at what level and form are these decisions agreed upon. Secondly, was the fact that there was need to understand even with the persisting drought emergencies, whether indeed early warning was in actual sense informing political planning both at the high echelons of the county executives as well as in the county based legislatures.

Last but not least, this study forms part of KAS interventions in the area of food security in Kenya under the initiative one world – no hunger (Eine Welt ohne Hunger) initiated by the German Ministry for economic cooperation and development. To be able to have a more informed approach to interventions by KAS, other development partners and the two tiers of government, it's imperative to have a body of information which helps to describe and explore the various issues of political planning in light of early warning and in recognition of the need to promote food security.

The study was highly qualitative in nature and made efforts to engage the local elected politicians, the clerks of the county assemblies, members of the county steering groups, government departmental staff as well as the Non-State Actors. Furthermore, the study is structured in a way that each county has its own analysis done flowing separately and based on pre-determined sub themes. Thereafter, a conclusion is provided and tailor-made recommendations developed.

We hope that this study will help to espouse political goodwill especially during decision making and resource allocation in light of early warning and food security. This study should incrementally also help to strengthen the growing political commitment at the national level especially on integrated risk reduction strategies and other related actions that apply in the arid and semi-arid (ASAL) areas of Kenya. It is our hope that you will find this study interesting to read. Thank you and enjoy!

Dr. Jan Cernicky,
Country Director,
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung,
Kenya Office.

Executive Summary

This report is an account of a baseline study carried out in West Pokot and Baringo Counties on the utilization of EWS information in political planning by KAS. The study was informed by the fact that food emergency needs persist in the ASAL counties of Kenya despite availability of EWS data. The study thus, sought to investigate the notion that EWS information is not adequately incorporated in political planning. The study is equally in line with the Drought Resilient and Prepared Africa (DRAPA) strategic framework proposed in 2016 for African countries to overcome drought and food insecurity. The study was undertaken on the 14th – 24th February 2018 in Kapenguria (West Pokot County) and Karbanet (Baringo County) respectively; and focused largely on middle level to senior County Executive Members (CECs), County Assembly representatives as well as experts in EWS working in the counties.

This baseline study relied on qualitative data collected through interviews. The respondents were selected through purposive sampling for key informant and in-depth interviews. Focus group discussions were also employed targeting MCAs, county assembly clerks and Members of the County Steering Group. The data collected was analyzed qualitatively and presented in a narrative explanatory manner.

The baseline survey concluded that EWS information was available at the county level but the challenge was on access especially outside the structure of the county steering group. Furthermore, in both counties, it was found out that the EW information was not well connected to the debates in the county assemblies as well as during fora meant to consolidate the representation roles of the MCAs. Generally EW information was more prominent than the traditional knowledge management mechanics, although still, the later was not used proactively to engage politicians in the planning phase but in approval and implementation stages, making it difficult to mobilize political support or goodwill in both counties even though seemingly the degree of political goodwill varies. There was a clear disconnect between the executive and the County Assembly in information sharing in the two counties hence affecting the timely intervention on drought effects and food insecurity. This problem was compounded by the fact that the county steering groups and the executive arm of the county governments do not directly share information with the county assembly at the planning level thus showing a lack of a proper functioning structure for information sharing.

The study also found out that debates in reference to food security at the County Assemblies are impactful and inadequately cited EWS information bulletin that were generated monthly. Furthermore, the politicians (majority being newly elected) had less capacity to use of EWS information in planning as they are more inclined towards political actions such as approval of supplementary budgets and oversight of relief service distribution which are more tangible and to them gain them political mileage within the community.

The baseline study therefore recommends capacity building of politicians and individuals dealing with EWS information. Such capacity building should be tailored towards changing the attitude of politicians towards EWS and allowing their action to trigger timely response to early warning through

policy formulation and legislation. Mainstreaming of EWS informing in all departmental and sectoral planning is another key recommendation. This will ensure all areas of EWS on drought and food security are taken into consideration in both midterm and long term county planning. With good political will and proper understanding of the EWS information, the study concludes that bold steps can gradually be adopted by all stakeholders for a food secure Northern Kenya led by the two counties of West Pokot and Baringo.

Glossary

Alert: A notification category between “advisory” and “activation” that provides urgent information and indicates that action may be necessary. A terminology that is used in the EWS bulletins by the NDMA.

Capacity: The combination of all the strengths, attributes and resources available within a community, society or organization that can be used to achieve agreed goals.

Capacity building: The process by which people, organizations and society systematically stimulate and develop their capacities over time to achieve social and economic goals, including improvement of knowledge, skills, systems, and institutions.

Climate change: A change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g., by using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties, and that persists for an extended period (like 30 years), typically decades or longer. Climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external forcing, or to persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use (Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)).

Contingency planning: A management process that analyses specific potential events or emerging situations that might threaten society or the environment and establishes arrangements in advance to enable timely, effective and appropriate responses to such events and situations.

Disaster: A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.

Disaster risk management (DRM): The systematic process of using administrative directives, organizations, and operational skills and capacities to implement strategies, policies and improved coping capacities in order to lessen the adverse impacts of hazards and the possibility of disaster.

Disaster risk reduction (DRR): A systematic approach to identifying, assessing and reducing the risks of disaster. It aims to reduce socio-economic vulnerabilities to disaster as well as dealing with the environmental and other hazards that trigger them.

Early Action: Processes of consultation, policy making, planning and action to reduce or avoid disasters or hazards. Term usually used in conjunction with early warning.

Early Warning System (EWS): The systematic collection and analysis of information coming from areas of crises for the purpose of: a) anticipating the escalation of violent conflict; b) the development of strategic responses to these crises; and c) the presentation of options to critical actors for the purposes of decision-making. The set of capacities needed to generate and disseminate timely and meaningful warning information to enable individuals, communities and organizations threatened by

a hazard to prepare and to act appropriately and in sufficient time to reduce the possibility of harm or loss.

Forecast: Definite statement or statistical estimate of the likely occurrence of a future event or conditions for a specific area.

Hazard: A potentially damaging physical event, human activity or phenomenon with a potential to cause loss of life or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption, environmental degradation amongst other effects.

Impacts: Specific effects of hazards or disasters also referred to as consequences or outcomes.

Mitigation: Short and long-term actions, programmes or policies implemented in advance of a natural hazard or in its early stages, to reduce the degree of risk to the people, property, and productivity capacity.

Preparedness: The knowledge and capacities developed by governments, professional response and recovery organizations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from, the impacts of likely, imminent or current hazard events or conditions.

Resilience: The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions.

Response: Actions taken immediately before, during or directly after a disaster to reduce impacts and improve recovery from disaster effects.

Risk: The probability of harmful consequences or loss resulting from the interaction between natural hazards and vulnerable conditions of property and people.

Risk assessment: A methodology to determine the nature and extent of risk by analyzing potential hazards and evaluating existing conditions of vulnerability that together could potentially harm exposed people, property, services, livelihoods and the environment on which they depend.

Risk management: A systematic approach and practice of managing uncertainty to minimize potential harm and loss.

Sustainable development: Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Vulnerability: Vulnerability refers to a set of conditions resulting from physical, social, economic and environmental factors which increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of disasters.

Table of Contents

Preface	ii
Executive Summary	iii
Glossary	v
List of Figures.	viii
Abbreviations	ix
CHAPTER ONE	1
1.1 Background of the study	1
1.2 Study objective.	2
1.3 Study methodology	3
1.4 Study Site	4
1.5 Research Design	4
1.6 Data Analysis and Presentation.	4
CHAPTER TWO	5
2.1 Literature Review	5
CHAPTER THREE	11
3.1 Findings from West Pokot.	11
3.2 Findings from Baringo county	18
CHAPTER FOUR	27
4.1 Conclusion and Recommendations.	27

List of Figures

Figure 1. Source: Buchanan-Smith and Davies, 1995	6
Figure 2. EW information use in the assembly to inform debates and resource allocation.	14
Figure 3. EW information use by politicians	16
Figure 4. EW information exchange points between the executive and the legislature	17
Figure 5. EWS information use in political planning by county structures and departments	20
Figure 6. EW information use in the assembly to inform debates and resource allocation.	21
Figure 7. Improvement of integrated planning that encompasses EW data.	23
Figure 8. EW information use by politicians	24
Figure 9. Vote on where food security and EDE related policy proposals have or have not been suggested in the assembly	26

Abbreviations

ASAL	Arid and Semi-Arid Lands
ASDSP	Agricultural Sector Development Support Programme
AWSC	African Women Studies Centre
CECs	County Executive Committee(s)
CDPP	Community Disaster Preparedness Plan
CIDP	County Integrated Development Plan
CSG	County Steering Group
DCM	Drought Monitoring Center
DRAPA	Drought Resilient and Prepared Africa
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DRSLP	Drought Resilience and Sustainable Livelihood
EDE	Ending Drought Emergency
EWS	Early Warning Systems
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FEWSNET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FSNAU	Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority Development
ICPAC	IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Center
IPCC	Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change
KAS	Konrad Adenauer Stiftung
KFS	Kenya Forest Service
KMD	Kenya Meteorological Department
MCA	Member of County Assembly
NDMA	National Drought Management Authority
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSA	National Security Agency
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
TDCPU	Turkana Drought Contingency Planning Unit
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
WFP	World Food Programme

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Background of the study

Emerging from the need to generate baseline insights on mid-term political planning and how it relates to drought disaster early warning systems, the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) went ahead to conduct this study. The baseline study targeted the counties of Baringo and West Pokot, not to plainly describe the current architecture of EWS, but to illustrate whether there is an established connection between the EWS and political planning and the outcome of such connection or relationship. While the predominant response to drought-induced food crisis continues to be food aid, this study hopes to contribute to providing alternatives that have higher probability of improving integrated planning in the long run. Presently, there is limited literature (if available), that explores this topical issue. This study will therefore serve to generate recommendations on how to fully support the use of EWS in the planning processes; with the eventual outcome being effective early action.

In Kenya, the frequency and impact of disasters -such as livestock and human death, famine, and resource based conflicts et cetera- associated with extreme climate events has provided grounds for exploring why amid the presence of warning systems, slow onset disasters continue to prove difficult to manage (OCHA 2017). While knowledge on early warning information provides an opportunity for reducing risks and exposure to drought related hazards, it's still unclear whether there is a consistent uptake by policy implementers. Poor public awareness and the unwillingness or inability, on the part of political leadership to use the information provided to mitigate and manage disasters before it escalates into humanitarian appeal, was identified by OCHA (2017) as one of the greatest challenges in the horn of Africa.

Rain-fed agricultural production supports up to 75% of the Kenyan population. However, about 88% of Kenya is Arid and Semi-Arid (ASAL) and constantly deals with the challenges and impacts of prolonged dry spells (Huho and

Mugalavai 2010). The increasing food insecurity has necessitated the indulgence of politicians at the national and county levels in Kenya to increase resources in key sectors such as water, agriculture, livestock, irrigation, health and nutrition among other sectors. While such progress continue to be witnessed on the part of politicians, it will be important to find out which information they consult to generate their decisions.

There has been a steady increase in funding for drought mitigation and food security projects by Non State Actors, biased towards addressing acute humanitarian intervention (Mbusya 2007). Despite improvements on the manner in which data is collected and shared from, the drought EWS response has continued to be more reactive; one that borders on crisis management approach rather than anticipatory and preventive risk management approaches. Such a situation affirms the fact that technocrats rather than elected officials engage more in planning.



Elung'at (2014) points to the fact that EWS signals are not often translated to early response as required. If they were translated, then Kenya would not be faced with the high frequencies of humanitarian crises. He argues that in most cases, humanitarian agencies who respond to EWS information and are often caught by surprise or take too long to respond, making the whole early warning response system less useful at the most critical times where it can save lives and livelihoods.

Politicians on one hand have been vibrant in using food aid as a political campaign tool and even thereafter, as a tool to keep them relevant, an attitudinal factor that is likely to make it more

difficult to use whatever scientific evidences to influence the course of planning, decision making and implementation. A look at the County Assembly hansard reports for Baringo and West Pokot Counties for instance shows a trend in political debates that is not keen to use existing policy researches or EWS information sources to enrich their discussions and eventual justification for approvals, amendments or otherwise. It is therefore important to also try to find out where there are attempts made by the policy implementers to involve politicians in public awareness and education as well as in information sharing and dissemination of EWS finding and recommendations.

1.2 Study objective

Main Objective

The main objective of this baseline study was to assess the use of EWS and integration of data in political planning in Baringo and West Pokot Counties

Specific Objectives

The study pursued the following specific aims:

a) To assess whether information generated from the EWS are used by the relevant county level structures and government institutions in planning.

b) To assess whether EWS information is used by political leaders in the County Assemblies to inform or influence the quality of debates.

c) To describe the interaction between executive, NSAs and the local politicians in respect to EWS and planning.

d) To understand the attitudes of local politicians in respect to EWS and planning.

e) To find out whether or not county planning forums at the ward level have integrated the importance of early warning information into their agenda.

f) To make recommendations on how early warning data can be integrated into political planning especially as an instrument for use by politicians.

1.3 Study methodology

Method of data collection

This study was mainly qualitative in nature and the sampling was majorly purposive. Aligned with the thoughts of Kothari (2004), the qualitative approach provided the window for the assessment of attitudes, opinions and behaviour. This data was collated, analyzed and presented using simple qualitative data collection tools. These tools included:

Key Informant Interview (KII) Guides

The key informants were selected and interviewed to provide needed information, ideas, and insights on the study based on their understanding of the context and the issues around EWS and general county planning. Individuals with insights on how government structures operate were selected to participate in this study. These included: senior representatives and chief officers from Departments of Water, Health, Agriculture and Livestock and Budget and planning. The key informants were 10 in total, (5) five from each of the two counties. The KII helped to gain insights on some of the questions that were not well articulated by the participants in the FGDs, which were conducted earlier on.

In-depth Interviews

More in-depth and consensus information was derived by a further interview schedule targeting experts in both government and non-governmental organizations dealing with EWS information in order to capture detailed/ in depth information on the study questions. This was also to supplement data obtained from focus group discussions and those that could not be sufficiently answered under the KII. The target group here included representatives from Civil Society Organizations such as: Red

Cross, World Vision, Hand in Hand, Food and Agricultural Programme (FAO), National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) and Agricultural Sector Development Support Programme (ASDSP). The study managed to conduct four in-depth interviews in either county.

Telephone Interviews

For key informants and in-depth interviewees that were not available for a one-on-one interview and whose views were deemed 'richly to inform the data collection process', a telephone interview was conducted. According to Kothari (2004: 17), this technique of collecting data plays an important role especially when the survey has to be accomplished in a very limited time. The same guide used for key informant and in-depth interviews were used for the telephone interviews.

Focus Group Discussions

The Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted in 3 groups in each of the two counties. The target participants were the Members of County Assembly (MCAs), County Clerks and County Steering Group (CSG). Each group had 10 participants. The FGDs were of importance as it gave an opportunity for the participants to share their own opinions and experiences based on the study.



■ 1.4 Study Site

West Pokot and Baringo Counties were identified as the study areas. The FGDs made attempts to engage participants that traveled from the agro-pastoralist and pastoralist areas from both counties while the KII and In-depth interviews concentrated on interviewees from the head quarter offices located both in Kapenguria and kabarnet for West Pokot and Baringo respectively.

■ 1.5 Research Design

This study was largely descriptive. Descriptive surveys are more reliable as they are used in preliminary and explorative studies to allow researchers to gather information, summarize, present and interpret for purposes of clarification (Borg and Gall, 1989).

■ 1.6 Data Analysis and Presentation

Qualitative data were analyzed according to the themes and study questions set forth in the Terms of Reference. Analysis was done in a manner to help the research team understand the emerging patterns, trends, and concepts as well as to find out existing areas of contradictions and consistency in terms of ideas and planning approaches. The data was then presented in a narrative manner.

CHAPTER TWO

■ 2.1 Literature Review

Retrospection: incorporating Early Warning Systems in Planning

Introduction: General outlook in Kenya and Sub-Saharan Africa

In the year 2011, the Horn of Africa experienced what was termed the most severe emergency since the dawn of the new millennium (Elung'at 2014). The emergency was triggered by severe drought that exposed 13 million people to the risk of death through starvation (Oxfam 2012). Somalia was the worst hit country. Early Warning signs of an impending crisis were evident months before it became a humanitarian crisis. The potential impact of a failure of the "short rains" as a consequence of La Niña phenomenon was predicted by the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) and the Somalia-focused Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) which produced 78 bulletins and undertook over 50 briefings to agencies and donors; but sequenced response from the government was minimal (Humanitarian Exchange, Number 53, February 2012).

In the verge of this catastrophe nearly 200,000 refugees in 2011 from neighboring Somalia sought humanitarian assistance in Kenya, settling at Dadaab refugee camp. The failed rains as forecast worsened the situation of poverty, escalated food and fuel prices and eventually led the government of Kenya to declare the drought a major humanitarian crisis in June 2011 (Oxfam 2012). The question to ask was whether Kenya lacked the financial and technical capacity to implement the recommendations of the reports emanating from the EWS or there it was simply a question of poor political goodwill or lack of a clear-cut planning strategy from the side of government? According to the Kenya Flash Appeal by OCHA (2017), the Agency argues that even though the Kenya government has a robust response mechanism, the scale of the disaster and humanitarian needs seems to overwhelm the capacity of her national structures.

The problem of reactive approach to resolving food insecurity

In reference to the above, while countries in the northern hemisphere engage in political decision-making that prioritize foreign policy and domestic considerations over humanitarian need, the contrary is the impression in sub Saharan Africa and East Africa in particular. The fact that there will be humanitarian assistance, rarely favor early action and often conspire to make inaction convenient by most government actors. The Somalia drought in 2011, where delay was an obvious and inevitable consequence was as a result of strategies that were more emergency oriented leading to the Somali Government taking a back seat as opposed to getting involved and learning how to invoke the EWS in future decision making processes so as to avoid a similar occurrence.

Some of the humanitarian interventions activated have taken the forms of: cash and/or food assistance including through the Hunger Safety Net Programme; the Government's State department of Special Programmes; Government safety nets from the State Department of Social Protection; county governments; WFP, the Kenya Red Cross Society; and non-governmental organizations (OCHA, 2017).

Seeking political goodwill and early involvement

Humanitarian response by international partners and the Kenyan Government illustrate some positive energy and significant levels of political good at least at the national level.

Perhaps the challenge is with the manner in which political goodwill is mostly sought after, as it happens during the emergency drought disaster phase (in a worst-case scenario) unlike during the alert and alarm levels. Ideally, planning during the alert and alarm phase can help to strengthen the impact and allow for timely response (Buchanan-Smith, 2000).

Buchanan-Smith (2000) argues that the timing of response in the emergency phase forces the spiral movement downwards to the destitution level. In usual instances, most of the political debates would look at the recommendations of the EWS whereby 'a trigger of response' is likely to be unanimously agreed on. Famine and death at this level more pronounced and act as the justification for humanitarian assistance.

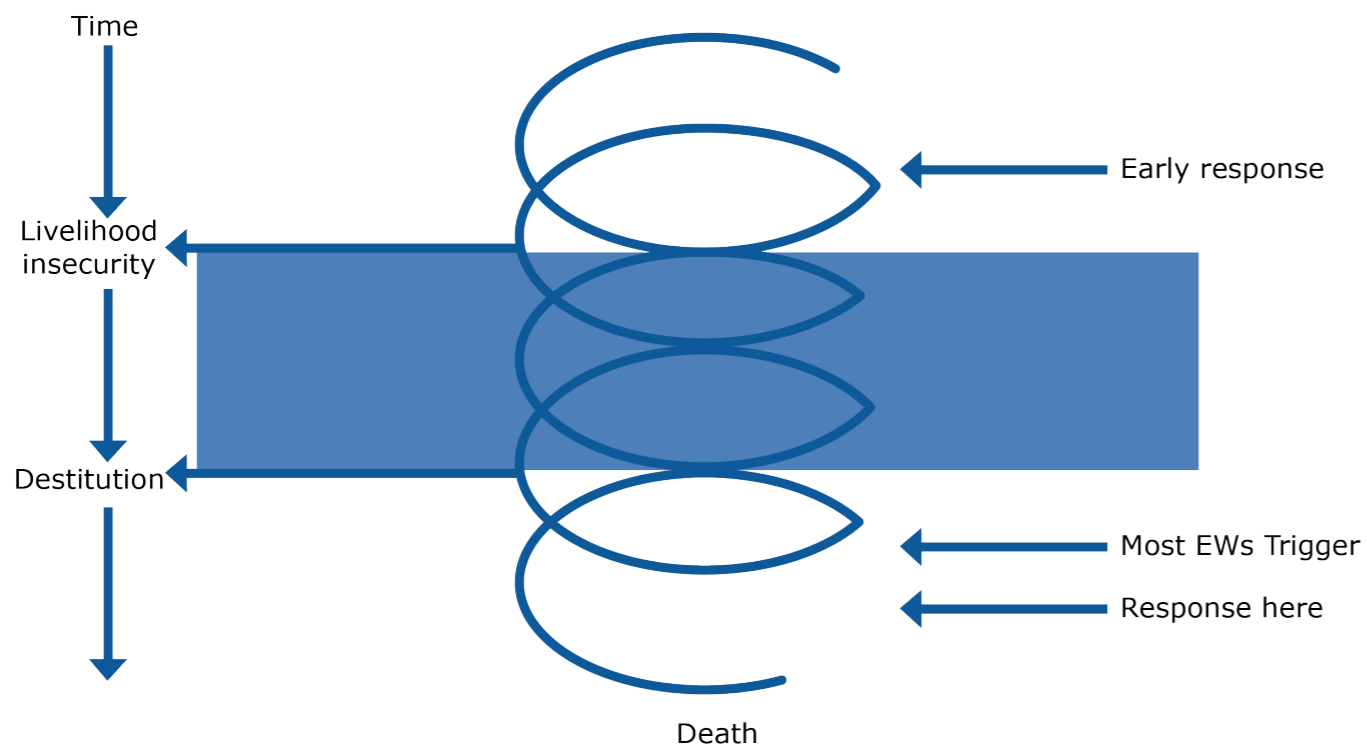


Figure 1. Source: Buchanan-Smith and Davies, 1995

Whereas the best timing would be before livelihood insecurity negates to destitution, there are various reasons as to why this in practical sense doesn't happen. These reasons vary from the question of who is the owner of the EWS (as this addresses political goodwill, political interest and possibilities of the policy

implementers to directly implement the information outputs from the EWS) as well as the timing and manner in which the EW information is interpreted. Important to note is that, implementing responses at an alert phase or within the livelihood insecurity action box, allows for more time to transport and distribute

the services and public goods (both of food and non-food items).

Politicians and the executive in planning, using EWS information

The 2011 famine was not the first of its kind on the continent but having droughts leading to food insecurity as a recurrent phenomenon meant that more investment in EWS was inevitable. The question then is whether Early Warning Systems (EWS) on drought and food security has worked effectively to deter hunger and famine at least from a political sense. Studies reviewed have not provided this answer in a more direct way. There is actually no evidence that political leadership both at the executive and parliament levels in the Horn of Africa and Kenya in particular have communicated in a manner to plan and produce decisions which are reflective of the EWS information documents. EWS that perform best ought to be characterized by the governments' recognition of their importance in the decision-making process (FAO 2006).

Political commitments have been made over time in the Horn of Africa and Kenya towards EWS response and food security. In Kenya, the policy on the Development Strategy for Northern Kenya was adopted in 2010, to among other priorities, combat food insecurity by bolstering response to EWS and empowering citizens to be resilient during extreme drought episodes (Government of Kenya 2012). Such policies are a product of planning and requires politicians to provide conducive environment that can support budgeting (*need for resources in the implementation of early warning interventions*) if the implementation phase is to succeed. However, most local leaders do not seem to understand the connection between the EWS, drought and food security. For instance, the African Women Studies Centre (AWSC) in 2012, the Kenya national budget proposals and planning documents with elements of supporting food security did not have a single mention of EWS as a source of input (AWSC

2012, University of Nairobi). It would appear that EWS information is given attention only by international agencies while local politicians concentrate on long term planning and only respond to short and mid-term planning through the EWS when the situation has worsened.

Strategic efforts to prioritize political planning on drought and food insecurity

The need to strengthen drought risk management strategies, through planning especially across the African continent has resulted in the proposal for the formation of Drought Resilient and Prepared Africa (DRAPA), a strategic framework that focuses on enhancing resilience to drought throughout Africa, while inspiring individual African countries to develop their own short and long-term drought mitigation plans (African Drought Conference 2016). The mechanics of how to go about the development of such plans was left to individual countries. The outcome of the development and implementation of this framework has been reported in Botswana, South Africa and Nigeria where planning strengthened the role of government to enhance drought resilience. Through collaboration with international institutions and countries globally, DRAPA lays a platform for African countries to be able to learn from each other and integrates the usage of EW information into sustainable development policies and planning.

Ethiopia, too, illustrates a scenario whereby information generated from the EWS is used in planning. According to an opinion paper by Al-Jazeera (February, 2017), the Productive Safety Net Programme was informed by a series of recommendations that emanated from various EWS sentinel sites within rural-poor communities facing chronic food insecurity. The recommendations to create community assets were widely rooted as the better approach towards harnessing self-sufficiency in respect to food production and disaster resilience. This programme has been prolific in addressing the Ethiopian 2016 drought situation. However,



what doesn't come out of the opinion paper is the nature or type of interaction between government executive, NSAs and the local politicians in respect to EWS and planning.

Mixed fortunes for Kenyan ASAL counties

Decision makers in Kenya participated in the development of policy frameworks such as the National Policy framework for the Sustainable Development of Northern Kenya and other Arid Lands. There is enough evidence to show that the presence of the policy has assisted in allocating more resources to areas formerly marginalized in national development. However, it is important to note that there are still challenges in the resource pool and how management of drought and food security is carried out. Furthermore, the presence of low literacy levels among communities and politicians in the ASALs in reference to EWS and inadequate sharing of information between the different pivotal organs of the government has added injury to the current challenges.

In the year 2016, by virtue of the Presidential assent to the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) Act, resources to strengthen the EWS were to be availed, protected by the legal framework. Due to a relatively well-resourced drought EWS, the NDMA was able to provide a sequence of predictions in respect to drought episodes in Turkana, West Pokot and other ASAL areas. Even though different reports point out to the usual problem of delay in response, still and fair enough, the predictions triggered the disbursements from a Drought Contingency Fund with the kitty receiving an extra 10 million euros from the European Union to help affected households prepare for the drought (Relief Web October 2016).

Political indifference and local community lack of interest have slowed down efforts aimed at strengthening the utility of EWS information in the long term. In West Pokot for example,

it emerged that there was need to explore irrigation as an alternative to improving food production and a five year Kiminia Irrigation Project was planned for. However, it immediately upon the start of its implementation as it faced hostility from locals and the political leadership who thought that one community was being favored vis-à-vis others. Subsequent years though saw that investment in communities through dialogue and awareness creation on the workings of EWS and general planning on matters food security was capable of bringing on board, both the locals and County Governments' staff on the table. The parties gained insights of the project and gave it a greenlight (West Pokot County August 2017). The project is estimated at Kes. 300 million funded by the African Development Bank and the Government of Kenya and will increase food production in the County, a perceived long-term solution to food insecurity.

Institutions solely charged with curbing disasters such as drought have greatly espoused the technicalities of how the EWS works. For the primary institutions to work more efficiently, they require supporting institutions whose main role is to mobilize support that can help sell the idea of EWS. In Kenya, some of the supporting institutions at the national level include the Ministry of Devolution and Planning which is equally the mother ministry of the NDMA (–an autonomous government authority), the Water Resources Management Authority, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry which houses the Kenya Meteorological Department. On 5th February 2013, the Sessional Paper No.8 of 2012 on "the National Policy for the sustainable Development of Northern Kenya and other Arid Lands" was launched. This was in a bid to address food insecurity, regional inequalities and promote economic growth in the ASAL counties. However, the policy did not have discussions on the role of the EWS in planning to reduce the frequencies of food insecurities.

EWS and political planning

Food security early warning systems are critical to political planning both locally and internationally. In addition to modern and sophisticated EWS in place, there is still widespread use of traditional drought EWS especially among the pastoralist communities. The reason why the traditional EWS is popular is because there is little flow of information and awareness about the drought and famine monitoring EWS generated by national and international institutions. Furthermore, according to Sommer (1998), the fact that majority of Early Warning Systems (EWS) have been perceived as foreign (not developed by the communities themselves), not much has been done to address drought stress. Most of the EWS bulletins are said to report majorly on agriculture. Pastoralists' needs are largely ignored in the early warning and response process, making EWS less popular in the sub-Saharan Africa.

Participatory scenario planning held in the past by partners like ASDSP have aimed at providing a common ground for both traditional drought EWS and the scientific (NDMA) early warning system to create a verification framework on indicators that were agreeable as well as to allow parties (traditionalists and scientists) to understand the various indicators in use, on both ends are also good in certain ways and should be used alongside accurate forecasts. As Buchanan-Smith and Davies (1995) argue, without good EW information, it is almost impossible to attempt a cost-effective targeting. Maintaining a strong information system (they argue), is a small price to pay to prevent the waste of resources in relief operations which are not directed and planned on the basis of reliable data. Usually this is the dilemma between planning and EWS data.

In the ASALs of Kenya, traditional EWS are richly diverse coping strategies employed by pastoralists in anticipation and response to drought. Most of these pastoralist communities have planned against serious droughts using

their EW mechanisms, and Pratt (2002) argues that this has in the past informed their coping strategies. Some of these strategies (which speaks to some form of planning) included migrations, reciprocal resource sharing, diversification and food storage. In Turkana, drought coping strategies for pastoralists have been identified in several literature to include livelihood diversification and loaning of animals. Because of the level of success registered, local politicians have used traditional structures where information from EWS is shared to craft their campaign agenda (FAO, 2009).

Implications of EWS information and action in Sub-Saharan Africa

In Ethiopia, the EWS are active in providing up to date data on drought situation that is then channeled through the formal policy planning and enforcement units in relevant departments of the government. The government coordinates with international agencies in ensuring efficient planning based on collected data from the EWS. In 2015, the Improved Early Warning – Early Action to strengthen disaster preparedness in Ethiopia project was developed by Oxfam GB and Christian Aid in collaboration with the National Disaster Risk Management Commission and the National Meteorological Agency to address limitations envisaged in the Disaster Risk Management Policy and Strategy of the government of Ethiopia (Start Network 2015). This was a move supported by national leaders in effort to make the EWS work better in response.

Food insecurity however remains a challenge in Ethiopia just like other countries in the sub Saharan countries despite the available EWS information. Somehow, the problem has been attributed to politicians who have been quick to dismiss the fact that their country has repeatedly been faced with dire food insecurity situation, and that this worsens in times of drought. Because of the form of government in Ethiopia, such information however true seemed to mock the capacity of the government to rule.





There are instances where governments have been accused of either bloating the number of people in need of relief assistance or providing fewer statistics. In Kenya, the statistics are always more as they appear attractive to the development partners and used as justification for more emergency support. In Ethiopia, the number is always reported lower in statistics than the actual number out there (BBC, June, 2017).

In Africa, regional centers such as the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Center (ICPAC) in Nairobi, Kenya and the SADC Drought Monitoring Center (DCM) in Botswana capital Gaborone provide current EWS data; develop climate outlooks and issue warnings to governments and international agencies to enable early preparations. ICPAC has enabled sharing of information across the IGAD states where the information is received by cabinet secretaries in charge of agriculture and water sectors. However, the guarantee of such information translating into action cannot clearly be stated as food scarcity and famine continue to be reported in the member countries.

EWS and political planning in Kenya

The proper use of EWS information in political planning is dependent on how such data is integrated in the policy making process.

Drought and food insecurity are already a problem in both West Pokot and Baringo. Policies are therefore developed in response for this apparent problem. Planning in the policy process is particularly important at the agenda building and decision making stages. This ensures that decisions are made with adequate information and that the proposals made respond effectively to the problems affecting citizens.

The Constitution and devolution laws, particularly the County Government Act, 2012 require the involvement of residents in the preparation of all county plans. This is demonstrated by the frequent forums created by the county governments to collect views not only for the five year integrated planning, but also for annual plans and legislative proposals. Even though the policy formulation process should involve all actors including politicians and the general public, government agencies are more involved in the process cutting out or ignoring the input of residents (Verschuere 2009). Consequently, politicians are also actively involved at the implementation phase hence dampening the policy making process and political planning. It remains to be seen how county governments in Kenya engage politicians and local communities at the planning stage in identifying underlying problems, agenda setting and formulation of solutions as regards EWS information.

CHAPTER THREE

3.1 Findings from West Pokot

This chapter discusses the findings in respect to West Pokot in an attempt to understand planning and EWS in a context specific fashion. The findings are presented in order of the specific study questions. The findings were mainly obtained through key informant interviews, In-depth interviews, phone interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs).

EWS information use in political planning by county structures and departments

The study found out that there is a drought EWS information bulletin which is published online on a monthly basis by the National Drought Management Authority with technical support from the Kenya Meteorological Department (KMD). From the data gathered through focus group discussions, the study was not able to establish a clear structural link where the County Executive directly engaged/consulted the legislature to gain their perspectives during the planning processes. This gap existed against the backdrop of a series of EWS bulletins which recommended for the mobilization of political support during action implementation phase. For example the NDMA West Pokot bulletin for December 2017 recommended for the support of community driven livestock destocking in the event of expected onset of dry season and delayed rains, an exercise that relied on political goodwill. However there wasn't yet to be a market oriented livestock destocking exercise by the time of conduct this study.

As pointed out in a Key Informant Interview (KII) with an officer from the County Government Department of Agriculture, such livestock destocking exercise succeed significantly in the past with the involvement of local politicians. *"Community members have in the past proven reluctant to sell their animals despite warnings of impending drought informed by livelihood stress or emergency levels"* said a discussant in an FGD with the CSG. Politicians in such a case hold the key to resolving any grandstanding decisions by community members. The destocking exercise took place but there is no

evidence of community based political support. Destocking in West Pokot is carried out majorly by the NDMA in collaboration with humanitarian agencies and the relevant institutions of the county government. Similarly, the NDMA recommended the support of peace building efforts along the borders to facilitate smooth market accessibility for the majority of pastoral communities. This is yet to be done though. Implementation of such an exercise immensely requires the willingness of politicians to play part.



Most of the key interviewees affirmed that politicians were able to use EWS information to guide their political agenda. A discussant in the FGD with the County Assembly Clerks pointed out that even though politicians especially MCAs were supposed to be instrumental in creating awareness among the people, debating on resource allocation and policy approval, the aspects of EWS was perceived new and 'complicated' to understand, signaling an aspect that they were yet to harness their engagements around. The study found out that the newly elected MCAs played their part in creating awareness on food security related issues; however, it was difficult to ascertain whether they used EWS data in reaching out to their people.

The study also established that EWS data informed planning at the executive level in a relatively significant level. The head of Budget and Planning Department in the County of West Pokot noted for instance that EWS data has increasingly become prerequisite in formulating anticipatory supplementary budgets due to planned activities of drought resilience. All the respondents interviewed both in the KII and the In-depth interview however brought out a perception that EWS data was yet to become a priority tool in planning despite the fact that it was the most scientific source of information that can best inform decisions.

The study established that there are programmes within the county that utilised EWS information. The County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) review process for 2018-2022 was said to have been infused with long-term implementation strategies that incorporates EWS information although yet to be approved for implementation. Also mentioned were the County Annual Development Plan, the Contingency Plan and the Emergency Fund. The contingency plans were available, but a review of the same brought out presence of a meagre connection between the EWS and the plan. For the emergency fund, the document was still a work in progress and therefore not much

in terms of analysis could be done. There are equally programmes and strategies adopted in collaboration with other stakeholders such as local NGOs and humanitarian agencies such as the Community Disaster Preparedness Plan (CDPP) which have found a place for further discussions within the County Steering Group; one of the multi-stakeholders' coordination platform led by the county executive and which espouses the importance of disaster risk reduction (DRR). Respondents also mentioned the Drought Resilience and Sustainable Livelihood Programme and Regional Pastoral Livelihood Programme as initiatives that integrated elements of the EWS.

The study findings revealed that Disaster Risk Management Unit (DRM) and structures at the county level have had difficulties in creating awareness around the EWS as the technical responsibility of doing this has in the past been left to the NDMA. Participants in the FGDs with CSG especially those from the local non-governmental organizations argued that the focus on EWS related issues relied more on NDMA without laying down proper formula for complementing and strengthening the intentions of the DRM office. *"Most of the decisions we make and the plans we attempt to develop only serve very short term interventions, like emergency reliefs, but in other normal circumstances, we would really like to support the sustainability of the county level DRM offices"* said one of the participants.

To demystify why there was an overreliance on NDMA in respect to planning around EW information, the study sort to establish the status of early warning, early response by the County Government. It was found out that the county had no EWS of their own but received information on EWS from the NDMA and organizations such as FAO and WFP. On the other hand, the county steering group which was deemed more of an ad hoc, lacked a legal framework to give the structure a legal mandate to oversee and strengthen the concept application of EWS especially through case

referral and action. *"Some form of quasi-legal mandate would help to set up a dedicated team to ensure that the outcome of the meetings as well as the EWS information were implemented and that resources would be available for such activities"* said a discussant.

Respondents from various county executive departments through the KIIs acknowledged being recipients of EWS data from the NDMA majorly through electronic mail and via publication of quarterly or monthly bulletins but planning was perceived highly voluntary and there wasn't a mechanism in place to reprimand systematic failure on action implementation. There have been deliberate efforts to have the County Government of West Pokot establish a parallel EWS. This was thought as important in helping to verify, strengthen referral procedures and complement the national government especially on matters which could be best articulated by the county government especially

in mixed farming and irrigated zones which the current EWS system by NDMA doesn't cover in terms of scope.

The County Government of West Pokot has departments mandated with planning. The Finance and Economic Planning Department liaises with other departments in the planning process to ensure all proposed policies and projects are implemented in line with available resources. With regard to EWS information, the Finance and Economic Planning Department assesses the data with the help of the newly created Pastoral Economy, Agriculture and Irrigation Department. Nonetheless, it emerged from the study that there was the need to have the county structures undergo refresher training especially on how to effectively follow up on the planning and implementation processes in light of sustaining interventions within the areas of drought management.

EWS information use in the county assembly to inform debates and influence resource allocation

The study found out that majority members of county assembly especially in the pastoralist and agro-pastoralist zones took the assembly debates on drought seriously. It was however pointed out in two instances by the key informant interviewees that the debates discussed by the Assembly touched on reactive measures as opposed to preventive efforts. One of the main reasons given for this was that the Members of the County Assembly (MCAs) lacked enough information to guide these debates. Some of their reactive measures included approval of emergency relief service plans and relief distribution as well as supplementary budgeting particularly during the times of severe drought. Even though the clerks were strengthened on EWS, they are still not effective enough to bolster the capacities of MCAs on matters early warning and the existing information documents. In most times, development partners have taken the approach of investing in the clerk office as knowledge management and institutional memory segment of the legislature but this is yet to translate into actual deeds.

Approval of budgets such as supplementary budget came closest to the MCAs debating on drought and EWS. All the MCAs recalled how speedily and timely they approved emergency

budget line within the supplementary budget in 2016 following the La Nina rainfall phenomenon in collaboration with the national government. The budget line was important in enabling the



executive to come up with counter measures to the La Nina problem. The study also found out that the reason why this aspect was taken seriously was based on a national call for preparedness stemming from the weather advisory from the KMD, usual component of all the drought EW bulletins.

The County Assembly has been ardent to support drought resilience programmes resulting from EWS information but six (6) participants in the FGD with the MCAs who agreed to this view were not able to point out on the specific programme(s) that they could galvanize their support around. An MCA mentioned that the approval of county budgets for purchasing of seeds and fertilizers in anticipation of both long and short rains was assumed to have been enriched by recommendations from the EWS information bulletins. Presenting a different line of argument, the majority of the clerks to the assembly as illustrated in the table below argued that while budgets were approved by the MCAs, the local politicians were more inclined

to address their political priorities and that their enthusiasm may likely not to have been concretely drawn from researches and data, at least based on the minutes and reports captured in the monthly sectoral meetings. Nevertheless, an example was given by the MCA participants in respect to farm inputs (fertilizers) which was included in the 2017/18 financial budget to benefit farmers in the County especially those in the agro-pastoralist zones.

This point was also brought up in an FGD with the CSG where only one of the members based on an open vote procedure¹ agreed that the County Assembly had in some instances used the data from the EWS for debates and resource allocation.

1. Open vote procedure in the context of this study meant allowing the participants to raise one of their hands on a general question that preferred ranking the responses.

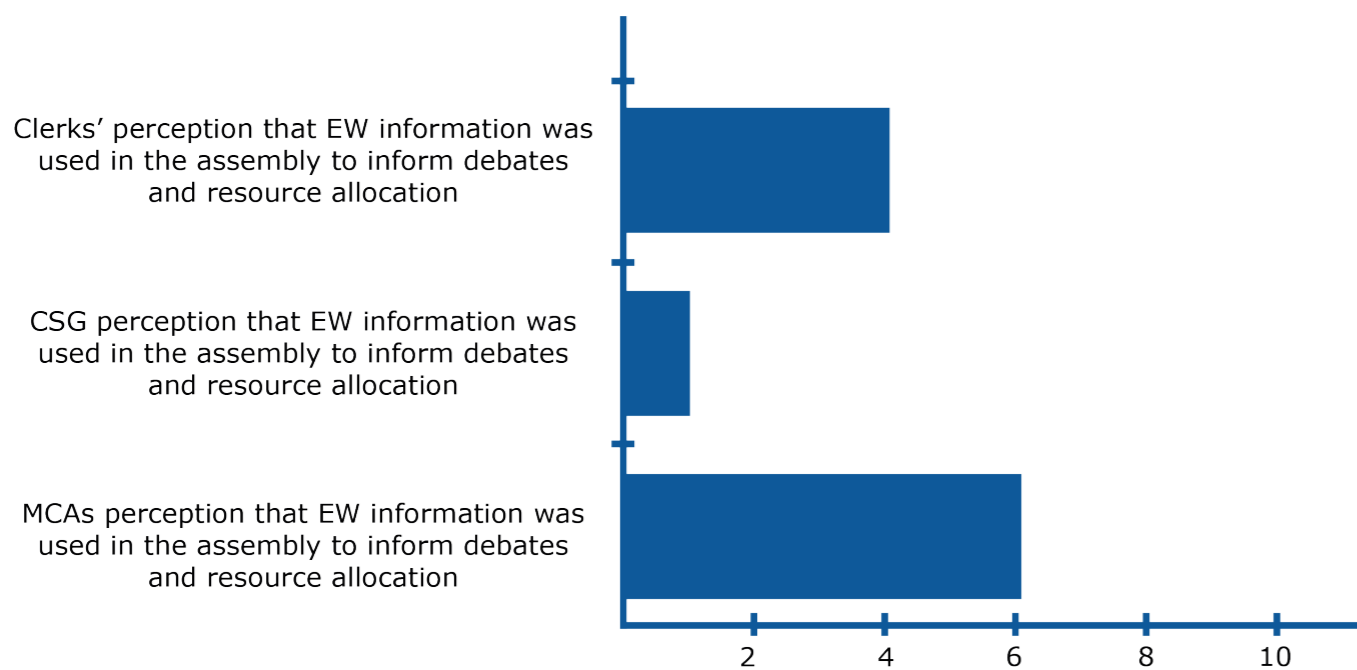


Figure 2. EW information use in the assembly to inform debates and resource allocation

Accusations and counter-accusations in respect to delayed process of EWS data integration through a participatory manner was also brought out in respect to access to EWS information by the MCAs and the County Steering Group in two of the FGDs. "We are left out only to come and approve budget without understanding the background programme or policy environment" said one of the discussants in an FDG with the MCAs. The back and forth in the approval of the disaster risk management policy despite the CSG having endorsed it already was identified as a facet that has slowed down the use of EWS in influencing budget allocation.

The study findings brought out the fact that illiteracy and ignorance has acted as deterrence towards enriching general discussions on food security and drought management let alone EWS information and early response. KII with local experts from the international humanitarian agencies indicated that some politicians were unaware or lacked interest on the benefits of acting on early information to prevent disaster. Moreover, it was widely shared that some politicians prefer traditional weather predictions as opposed to conventional forecasting that is more scientific and reliable. This compounds the current complexity of issues around EWS.

EWS information use by politicians for representation of the local people and their needs

MCAs in West Pokot have in the recent past collected the views about drought and food insecurity directly from the locals and thereafter looked for avenues to share the plights of their people and consolidate the support for motions in the county assembly. What seemed interesting is that most of them did not know that structures such as the County Steering Groups exist, and had no formal inter-governmental meetings to build consensus and understanding as well as common front on matters drought disaster management. The fact that most of them are newly elected meant that they have to take time to acquaint themselves with the rules of the house and the manner in which normal business of oversight and representation is done. This also affected members of sectoral committees such as water, irrigation, land, et cetera and other standing committees such as disaster management. In spite of this assertion, the MCAs reactive efforts such as feeding programmes for schools and households introduced at the ward level was the closest they came as far as food security and planning was concerned.

It was revealed that politicians majorly MCAs were instrumental in rooting for the recognition of the traditional EWS. While their support was more skewed towards the traditional system, local politicians were equally important as they had the reach on the electorate of which composed of local and indigenous people directly affected by drought (pastoralists and agro-pastoralist). MCAs were well placed to represent views of the public in the County Assembly and transmit the outcome again to the public.

In-depth interview respondents pointed out that even though politicians used issues within the food security spectrum for campaigns, they did not necessarily use EWS information as their basis of campaigns and in their political manifestos. This was particularly evident with the current MCAs. One respondent however acknowledged that political leaders vying for higher like a Member of Parliament and women representative positions recognized the role of early warning in drought mitigation within their political debates and agenda.

Moreover, the study established that because most local politicians didn't understand the concept application of the EWS, they were not able to use them during the campaign periods to woo voters. "Even if we had some understanding, such information is not common to us and may not go well with the electorate. The thing that sells is food aid..." said a discussant. Furthermore, the politicians argued that they were concerned with long-term tangible projects such as construction of bridges and roads. In one of the KIIs with the Non State Actors/Organizations, it was argued that politicians did not give priority to EWS information in mobilizing representation as this is easily forgotten by the public and their efforts may not be considered in future election periods.

From the findings, EWS information was found to be accessible by the top county executive officials or committee members whom by the nature of their appointment (political) were also former politicians. Such nature of appointments was perceived important in helping to connect the mind-sets of the politicians in the County Assembly and politicians at the helm of the executive (and who are directly elected by the people). For instance, the Deputy Governor

received regular information as the co-chair of the CSG and also from key departments that are central to combating food insecurity and tried to use the same information to engage with local communities and politicians in coming up with socio-political solutions.

However, the intention of the EW information did not directly reach the County Assembly and instances where the same was shared with the county assemblies, the format and tools used were perceived as complex (infused subtly within budget proposals or sectoral policies for approval). This element meant that MCAs could not use preliminary information or data from the EWS to engage the people either in creating awareness or in contextualizing the problems further for consideration in debates and lobbying for planning purposes. According to the county assembly clerk assistants, they have little understanding of EWS information and acknowledged having worked only on policy drafts and motions that were primarily aimed at implementing relief services. This is despite the pivotal role the sectoral clerks play in un-packaging planning documents and policy proposals for deliberation and decision making by politicians.

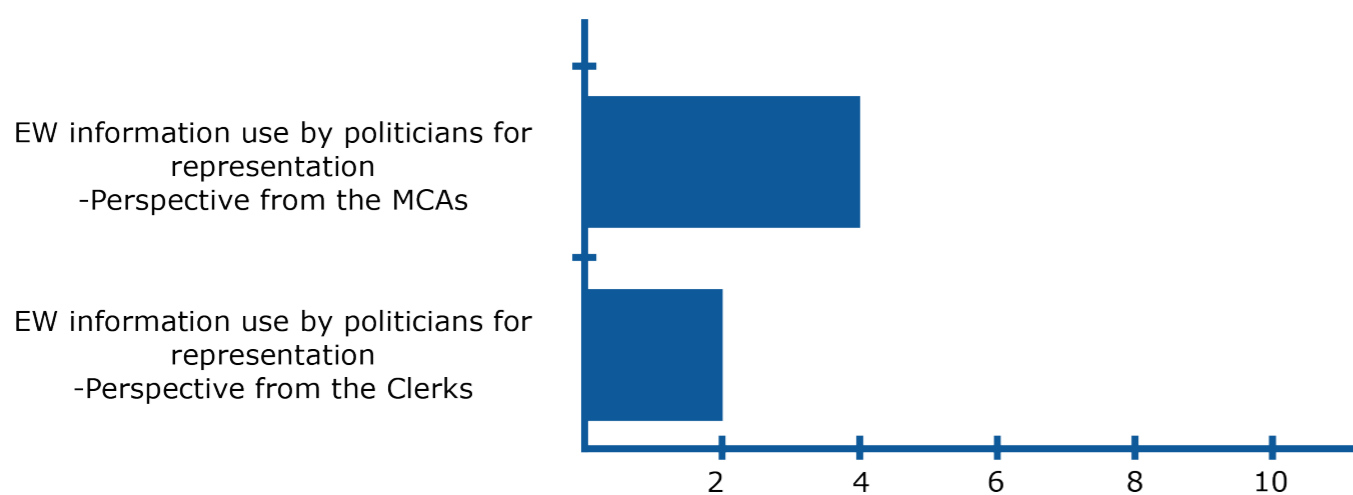


Figure 3. EW information use by politicians

From the table above, 4 out of the 10 MCAs in the FGD session, using the open vote procedure, indicated that they have used information believed to emanate from the EW system (although not clear whether NDMA's EWS or the

EW information use by politicians traditional knowledge management system) to engage their constituents in raising awareness or in setting agenda priority for representation in the assembly.

EWS information Exchange Points between the County Executive and County Assembly

In a focus group discussion with clerks of the County Assembly, most of the participants noted that county policies including those on drought or related to resilience building were drafted by the county executives although yet to be approved by the county assembly. The County Assemblies are mandated by the Constitution of Kenya to provide oversight, pass law, and approve plans and budgets among others. The study revealed that the County Assembly of West Pokot was often left to debate and passes or rejects the bills brought before the house. The other major activities of the County Assembly were the approval of budgets and this was argued as the nexus between the county executive and the assembly where the two organs communicated formally to plan and produce a political action (budget estimates). However, the interaction on budget was said to be done in haste with not much consultation with the locals and key stakeholders.

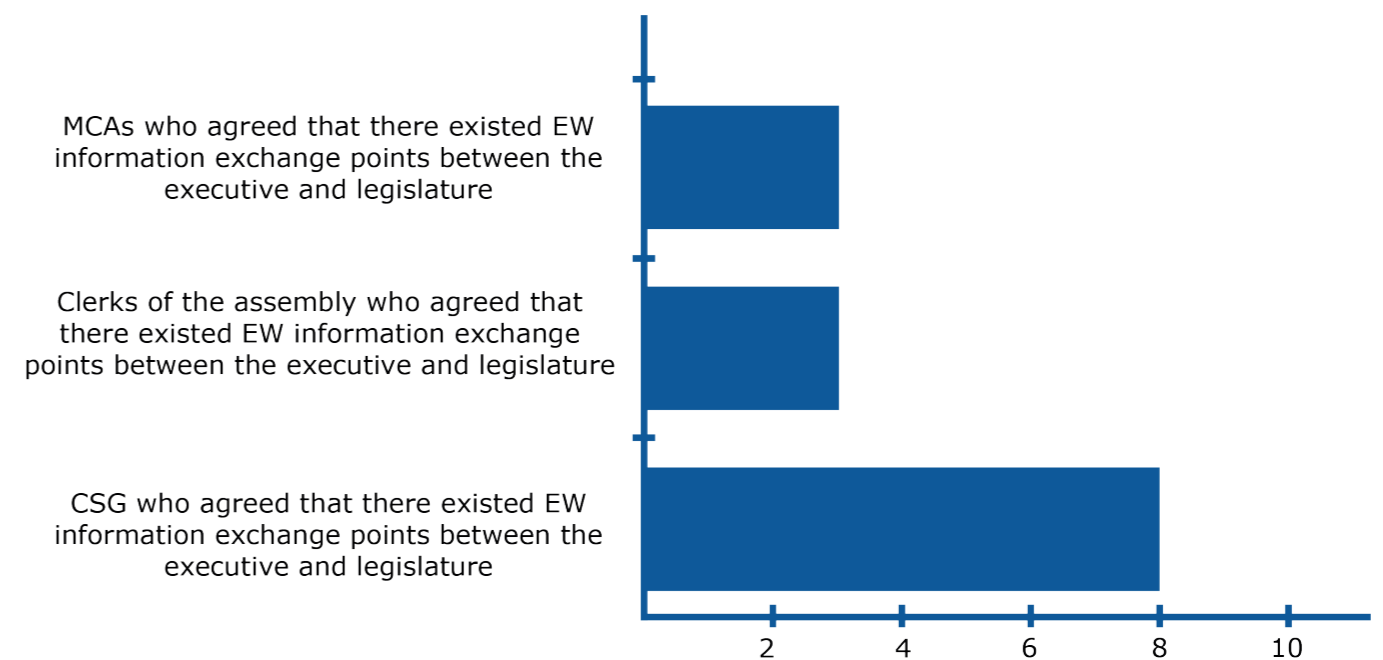


Figure 4. EW information exchange points between the executive and the legislature



Both key informants and focus group participants (clerks and the MCAs as per the table above) agreed that there existed weak exchange points between the county executive and county assembly. This weakness was informed by the fact that there is no direct avenue that connected issues that were agreed in the County Steering Group (CSG) with the county legislative organ mostly on planning aspects that required political good will; especially for ease of implementation. Note however, the CSG presented a point of view by noting that there existed EW information exchange points with a vote of 8 out of 10. Having no formal point of information exchange during the planning phase as argued by the MCAs and the County Sector Clerks meant that the MCAs were not able to internalize, address concerns from an informed position, learn new trends and later on use such information in carrying out their mandate

especially in the area of food security. It was revealed that there have been few instances where information to address food insecurities through the EWS bulletin were shared with the county assembly sector committees but then this was because of trainings that were majorly facilitated by donor or development partners.

Asked on how they rate the possibilities of engaging in a more formal process to promote consultative planning processes by the county executive and county assembly as concerns EWS information, DRM and food security, the respondents gave an average of 3.2 on a scale of 1-5 with five (5) being the highest possibility and one (1) being the lowest possibility. This feedback, points towards the need for more interventions to connect the two organs and ensure better seamless functioning in respect to planning.

area between political planning and political action especially where complementary disaster EWS information collection has not been set up despite by the county government despite the frequent occurrences of disasters in areas such as mixed farming and irrigated agriculture zones.

From the FGD with the County Steering Group, planning in respect to socio-economic development by the county government considered little to do with the NDMA's bulletin (EWS information), although the same was highly consulted during disaster risk reduction planning (DRR) by the national government. The two have been treated as different folds particularly during the planning processes (8 out of 10 of the discussants in the table below perceived planning of the DRR as a separate process and not well integrated in other development plans). This is likely to justify why most of the long term disaster reduction and investment projects were said to have been left out for the national government to implement.

In the FGDs with the MCAs and the Clerks of the Assembly, it was established that MCAs and local politicians in general did not participate in the dissemination of EWS information by relevant departments of the county executive. Access to EWS data was argued as only possible to a few politicians who had worked with the NDMA and who had made deliberate effort to reach out to the NDMA. The county assembly based on the fact that not all MCAs were from the agro-pastoral and pastoral areas, found it hard to convince their counterparts in gaining more information that would either enrich or tilt the programme budgets and plans to address some of the repeatedly mentioned recommendations from the EWS lowering their effectiveness to participate in the policy formulation aimed at strengthening food security.

Key informants from the county executive arm revealed that they received EWS information from the NDMA through the monthly bulletins delivered in most times via their e-mail. They explained that this information once shared is deliberated upon by various actors within the executive and thereafter presented at the CSG for expanded approach towards resolving any outstanding challenges related to drought and food insecurity. The monthly EWS information bulletins by the NDMA cover all sectors related to food security including water, nutrition, health, education, livestock and agriculture. For example, the January 2018, the information bulletin recommended the expansion of school feeding programme in areas worst prone to drought in order to sustain more learners as the county reached the alert phase. However, the study found out that some of the recommendations by the NDMA and the KMD were not taken into consideration by the county executive and county assembly during the planning phase (In-depth interviews with NSAs, 2018). This is reflected in the fact that most of the political actions relating to food security were being undertaken by the national government and international aid agencies.

While the importance of EWS information in political planning was appreciated, especially its significance in *making contingency plans and informing community needs during crises, it emerged that there was little to show when it came to planning.* "Yes, we have started to understand the concept, that they are still relatively new and not very easy to digest, and therefore it will take more time for the same to be appreciated and used in planning purposes" said a participant in an FGD with the CSG. Optimism and willingness to try integrate or infuse key community planning documents such as the community managed disaster risk reduction plans as well as the community level contingency plans/matrixes was expressed highly with 9 of the CSG members, especially those in main sectors of the county government as well as 7 and 5 for the clerks of the assembly and MCAs respectively showing support by way of the open vote procedure.

3.2 Findings from Baringo county

This section looks at the findings for Baringo County. The results are explained in accordance to the specific objectives of the study. Sub-headings have been used for each study objective findings and descriptive analysis.

EWS information use in political planning by county structures and departments

The study revealed that Baringo County Government despite having a Disaster Risk Management Unit that manages the impact of drought is yet to mount an EW system of their own to monitor and predict occurrences of disasters in mixed farming zones and depends on the NDMA's EWS bulletin (an EW information frame). This is despite the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) for the year 2013-2018 prioritizing the establishment of a "disaster information management infrastructure and early warning system". Disaster information centres or satellite offices in Mogotio and Chemolingot were established by NDMA and coordinate responses but rarely are referrals (responses that are devolved) made to the DRM unit of the county government. This specific instance points to a grey

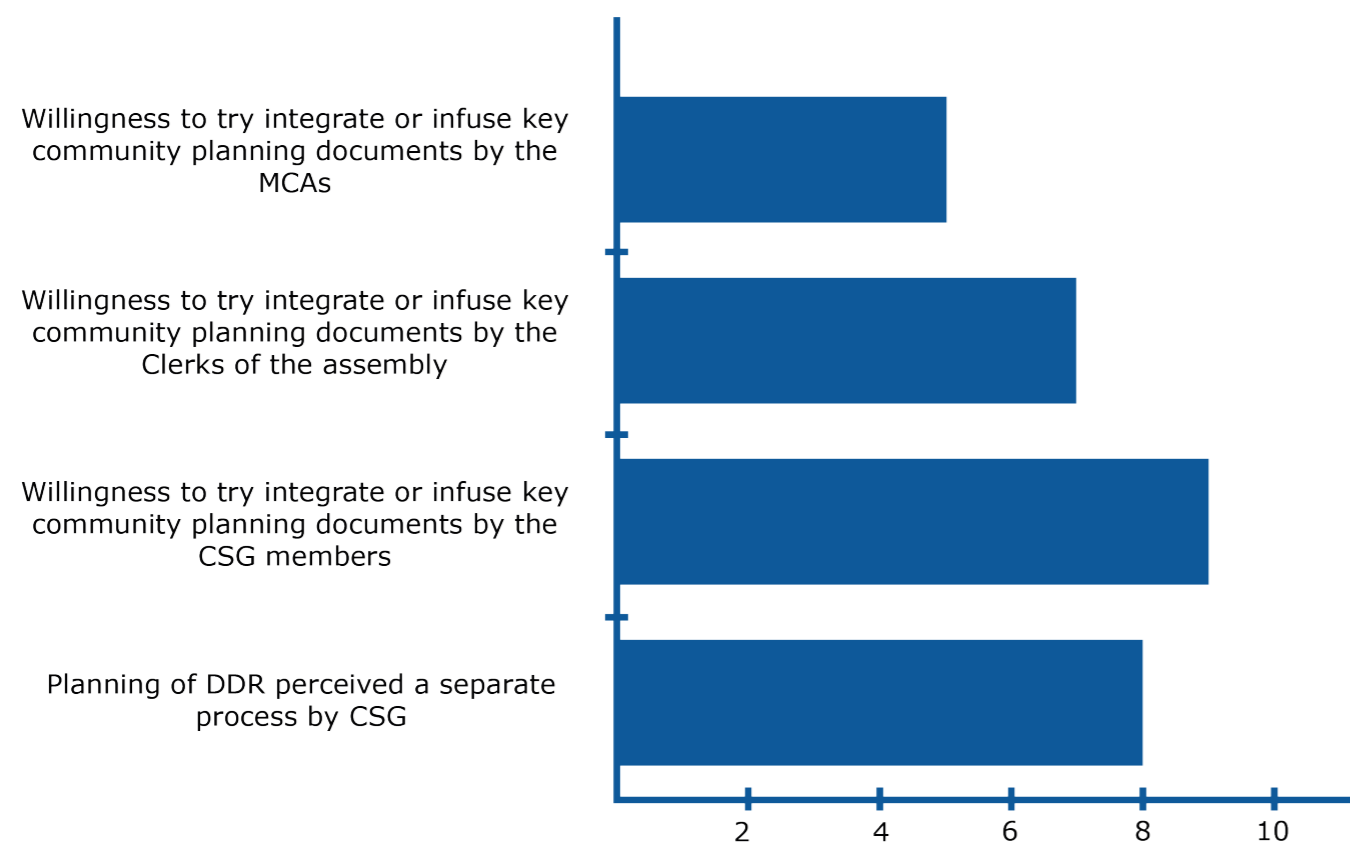


Figure 5. EWS information use in political planning by county structures and departments

The study found out that there were attempts by the county executive to conform to a planning process especially where the NDMA and the KMD raised a red flag of an impending disaster. Nonetheless as discussed earlier on, the process of planning to address the impending disasters was treated separately from the mainstream planning with quests for supplementary budgets. Even though supplementary budgets were important financial tools, as observed during the FGD with the MCAs, rarely was the Assembly engaged in a relatively proactive nature to attract goodwill. Furthermore, the study established that there instances where support during the planning phase experienced unnecessary shut due to competing political interests (FGD with MCAs, 2018).

The evaluation of the drought situation included liaising the EWS information with traditional weather predictions as reported through traditional channels and equally through forums such as the participatory scenario planning.

While such forums were able to assess the scope of drought related implications on the local community, there were no mechanisms to fast track their inclusion in decision making at the county level. While it was easier for the departments of Agriculture and Water to ensure the EWS data received from the NDMA and the KMD aligns with the happenings on the ground as they were in written formats, this was not easy with the traditional predictions.

There is also the long rains assessment (LRA) and the Short Rains Assessment (SRA) which gives a clear picture of prevailing circumstances of food insecurity and the trends to follow. The assessment has been a necessary course of action as it informed the level of response needed in order to verify and deal with a threatening situation more efficiently. However, much of the recommendations from the assessment were found to be done through planning processes by the National Government.

EWS information use in county assembly debates and to influence on resource allocation

Generally, the role of the legislature is namely: representation, law making and oversight. Motions on EWS have hence been debated in the county assembly even though in most cases the debates touched on reactive measures as opposed to preventive measures.

The study established that there were motions centered on DRR even though not directly. However, the motions based on an FGD with the Clerks to the Assembly indicated debates that were relatively rushed and quick fixes provided purely on reactive basis. Measures such as the approval of the county contingency and emergency funds were successful but only after thoughtful lobbying by the executive.

The study observed a widespread feeling among key informants on the capacity of MCAs to exhaustively debate on EWS information. This is with the understanding that MCAs were ill

prepared and lacked elementary skills to provide informed positions based on well researched data even though available to them. The open vote procedure illustrated that 4 of the MCAs could use the EWS information bulletin in their current state to defend positions or initiate debates on certain political actions. Only one (2) out of the 10 Clerks of the assembly indicated that EW information was used to inform debates and guide sector meetings in the assembly. For the CSG members, (3 out of the 10) had the perception that EW information was used in the assembly to inform the debates on food security.

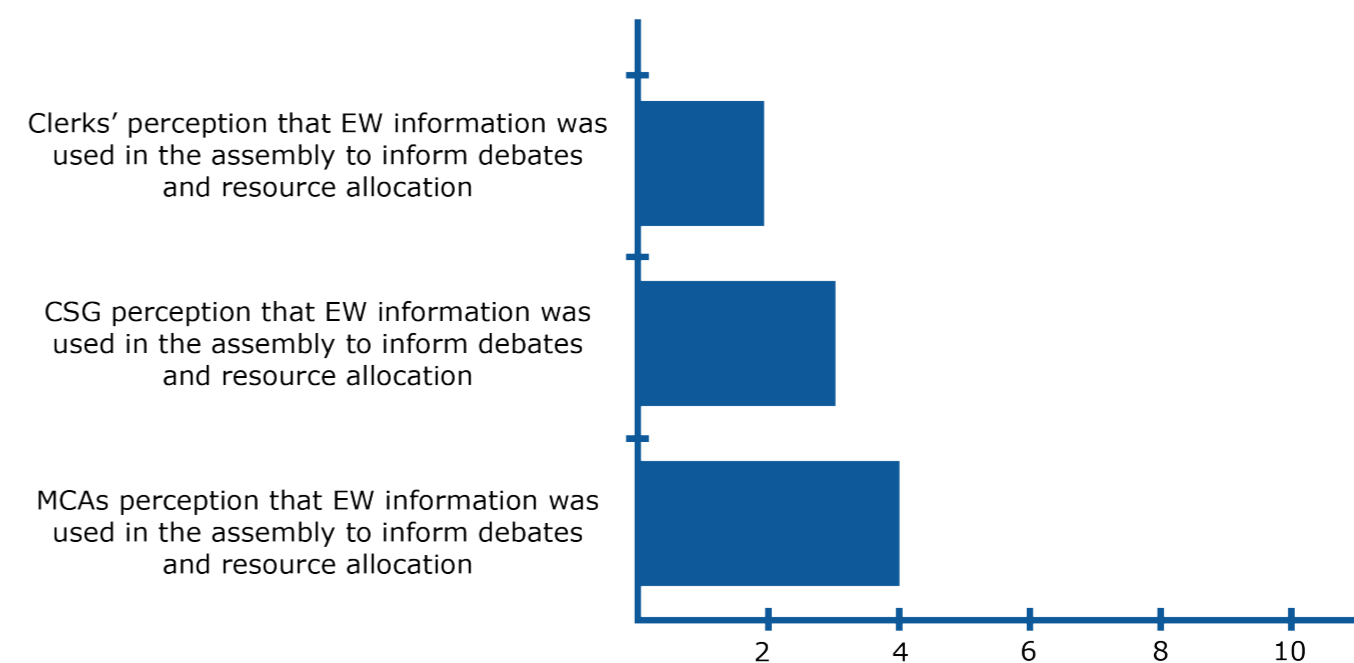


Figure 6. EW information use in the assembly to inform debates and resource allocation

The County Assembly has a number of sector committees specifically created to oversee issues that relate to ending drought emergencies (EDEs). These committees include the Disaster Management, Agriculture and Livestock, Water,

environment and Natural resources, transport, and Health. "Their main scope of work is to initiate motions that can guide the rest of the assembly deliberate on issues at hand including Bills and policy proposals. So far, we haven't

received anything that prioritizes the issue of early warning and one that asks for our support” said a discussant in one of the FGDs with the MCAs.

The study found out that the committees were able to provide the county assembly with some form of guidance and insights during debates and motions since members of such committees are elected and/or selected on the basis of their experience and expertise on matters surrounding the scope of those committees. While their guidance and insights is significant within the sector issues, the FGDs with the Clerks and the MCAs (as illustrated in the graph below) presented a picture that the same significant insights/inputs would not necessarily apply when dealing with issues of Early Warning information and how to use them to influence political planning and decisions.

One of the outstanding issues noted in the in-depth interviews with the NSA interviewees was that the final output in a policy framework in most times reflects the quality of the prevailing political process not only in planning but also both in decision making and in implementation. If such policies and plans are approved (where in most times, plans and policies with huge cost implications have to be approved by the county assemblies just like the parliament at the national level), then fast tracking this even with the help of the Non State Actors still remains a huge challenge, as there is nothing politically and legally binding about them. *“This is where the discussions around policy formulation should begin from and where awareness creation should pivot around”* said a county assembly clerk discussant in an FGD session.

The study makes an assumption based on the feedback from the majority key informants and key in-depth interviewees that the lack

of knowledge and understanding of the EW information in the county assembly may have minimized their ability to lobby for increased funding that reflected the wishes and recommendations of the many monthly bulletins from NDMA’s EWS. The outcome as observed in 8 of the monthly EW information bulletins (from the Month of July 2017 to February 2018) was the presence of huge resource allocation gaps particularly in respect to what was planned in the respective sectoral departments of agriculture, livestock, transport, veterinary et cetera vis-à-vis the recommendations from the bulletins. *“There could only be one good reason for that, either the previous financial budget had been passed by end of June, and therefore this meant that planning had already been conducted and therefore very little could be done in terms of re-planning as the process of introducing several supplementary budgets is not an easy task, or there was a complete breakdown in the usage of EWS information for resource planning”* said a member of the NSA during an in-depth interview.

The challenge that emanates from the helplessness of the different departments to use the EWS information bulletin to pursue common good within the field of food security promotion and drought management is that it further relegates the intentions of institutions such as NDMA in the first place. These institutions even though established, remain ‘less influential’ in terms of skewing research resource allocation. In conclusion nonetheless, integrated planning was thought by 6 out of the 10 of the County Steering Group members to have improved in the last 2 years while 3 out of 10 MCAs thought integrated planning had improved even though not necessarily due to EW information bulletin or other traditional knowledge sources. The same figure 3 out of 10 was also shared with the county assembly clerks.

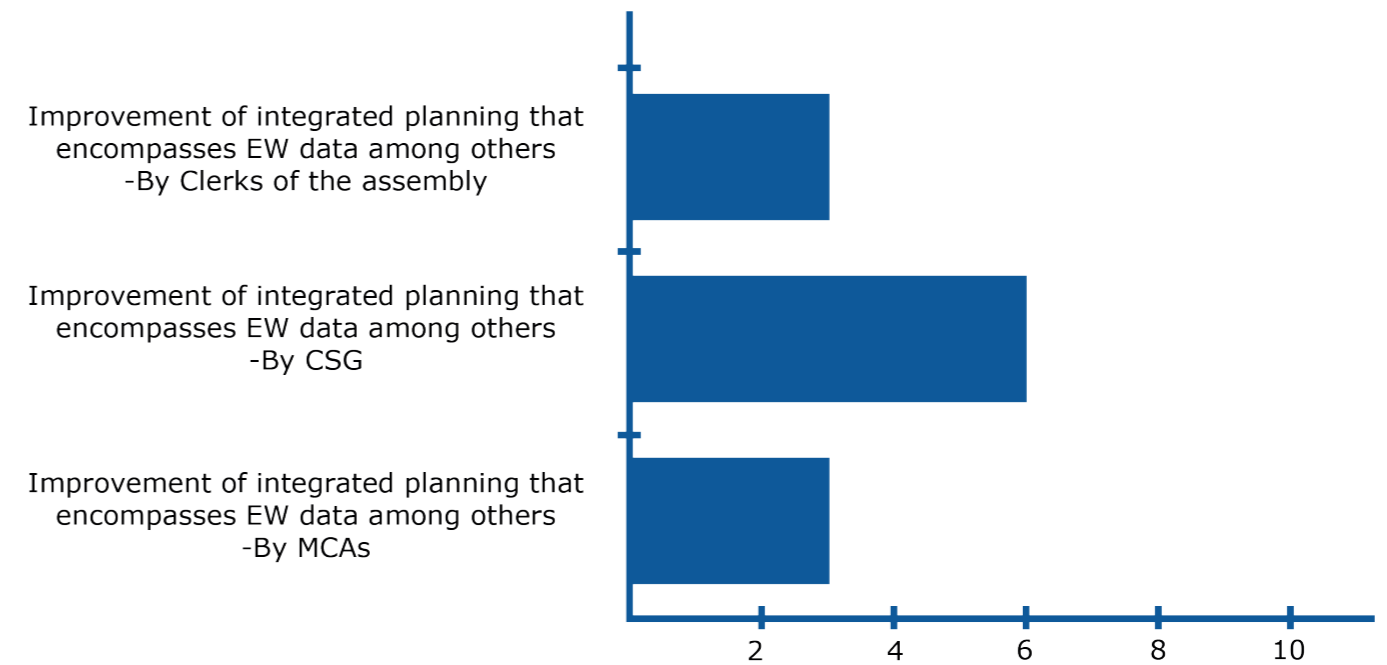


Figure 7. Improvement of integrated planning that encompasses EW data

EWS information use by politicians for representation of the local people and their needs

Politicians serve an important role of representing their electorate on current matters of public good. Leaders such as MCAs are elected on the basis of how well they articulate to the prevailing political, economic and social issues affecting their people. While it is the onus of MCAs in the County Assembly to ensure that the views and needs of the people are well articulated in assembly debates, this study consequently attempted to find out whether this actually happens in respect to using EWS planning documents.

The study established that MCAs were yet to participate in debates or present motions that used EWS data to inform policy and county development strategies plans, even though they showed interest. While the use of EWS data or information is highly expected given that Baringo is among the ASAL counties and more prone to disasters such as drought and flooding in the pastoral and agro-pastoral zones, only 3 out of the 10 MCAs in the FGD indicated having used existing traditional EW information to gain perspective of an impending drought disaster

in their Wards/zones. None used the EWS information bulletin. Majority of the solutions provided were collected from the locals directly and included food relief and cash transfers (what is known as Inua Jamii programme). Six (6) out of the 10 clerks indicated that MCAs used either the traditional or scientific EW information for representation (in terms of asking for humanitarian assistances and budget increment on livestock and agricultural protection).

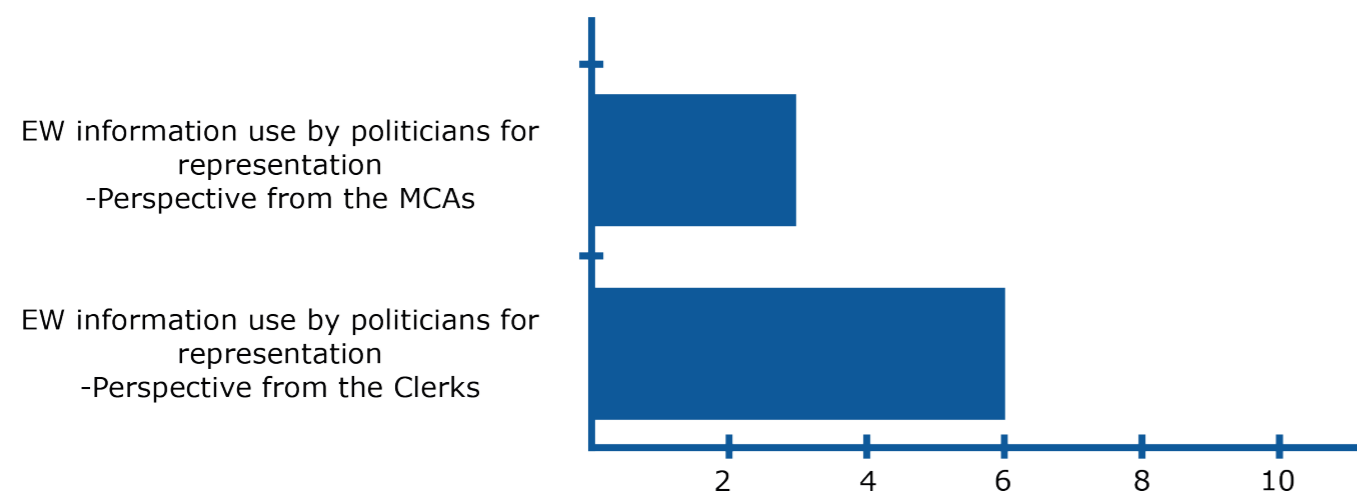


Figure 8. EW information use by politicians

Despite the willingness to use EWS information to mitigate drought effects, local politicians complained of the complexity of the information and the challenges they faced in filtering information or interpreting the information on EW during community fora. A KII respondent in the survey noted that *"politicians may not easily comprehend the intentions and findings in the EWS data."*

It was clear that politicians could not competently understand the raw data from the field and bulletins from NDMA without prior interpretation by technical parties majorly within the County Executive and also drawn from the NGOs. Politicians thus developed less interest in the use of EWS information in dispensing their representation and oversight roles. Most key informants from the county departments were however not confident that even with politicians having improved their knowledge, that they would shelve their own political interest and settle largely on scientific research (using the EW data) as a source for planning particularly in agro-pastoral and pastoral zones.

The study found out that politicians were more interested in quick deliverables or short term outcomes irrespective of whether they participate at the planning stage or not. This presents points of conflict as the planning

process may have been designed to address in a long term, the drought and food insecurity situations. Interviewees with KII from the county executive indicated that past elected politicians and key opinion leaders had tremendous influence among the local community members hence stalled projects that they deemed not aligned with their 'political expectations'. An example was given on the drilling of boreholes by the Kerio Valley Development Authority along the border communities and because the same was not a priority for most politicians that were from other pastoral zones, they thwarted the exercise demanding for their communities to be considered first without understanding why planning and decision was made the way it was. The implication is that the Authority had to stop the exercise.

Local politicians have not encompassed EWS as a campaign strategy during elections and therefore drought is not given a priority in debating within the county assembly. Key informants interviewed affirmed that politicians rarely used EWS information as a tool to inform their political lining. This is because of the assumption that the local people are interested more on tangible deliverables and EWS information though critical may not guarantee quick realization of such tangible deliverable like relief foods et cetera.

EWS information Exchange points between the County Executive and County Assembly

In a focus group discussion with MCAs of Baringo County, 8 of the discussants noted that they are hardly consulted in policy formulation and planning by the county executive on matters that touched or resulted from the EWS. The clerks to the county assembly indicated there no records of consultation on matters of EWS information with only 1 (one), pointing out that the agricultural committee was able to have a meeting with their counterparts to understand their budget and intention and such platforms allowed for issues of EWS information to be indirectly roped into the conversations. Most of the MCAs argued that they were involved during budget hearings and approval sessions. This presents a disquieting gap both in the political and policy processes. The Public Finance Management (PFM) Act 2012 prescribes budget formulation process that must begin with planning, drafting of policy and stakeholder participation before considering legislation and implementation. The same is the custom in any policy processes, but adherence was deemed a difficult task.

Poor technical knowhow and expertise on drought management were some of the identified barriers to effective coordination between the executive and the county assembly. It was reported by the key informants that a majority of the MCAs had limited technical knowledge on food security EWS whereas the executive arm had more technical level employee who because of structures such as the county steering group, gained more understanding of EWS. This mismatch and with no direct connection to such structures meant that the MCAs were limited in terms of EWS information and related knowledge.

explains why no Bill or policy draft on drought and food security has emanated from an MCA or from within the assembly. Eight (8) out of 10 clerks of the assembly in an FGD indicated that MCAs between September 2017 -when they were officially sworn into office- and March of 2018 were yet to suggest food security and EDE related policy proposals or debate in the assembly despite EWS being components within the policy draft frameworks. Interestingly, 6 of the MCAs also indicated that they had not participated in debates on policy drafts with components on EWS while 4 did not know whether they debated or not.

The apparent gap between the executive and the county assembly has also been a factor that



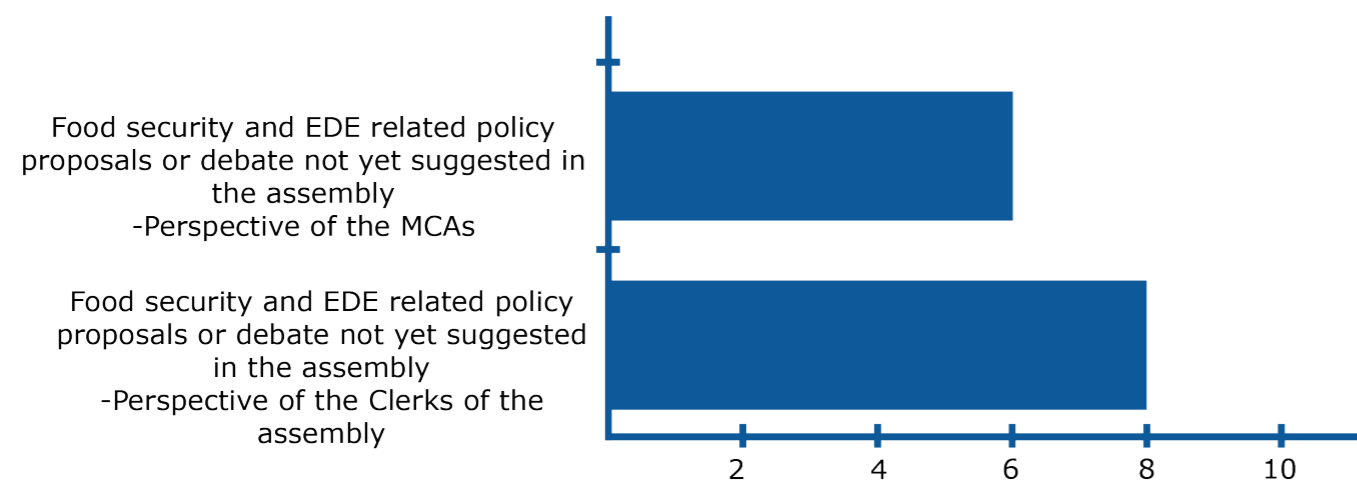


Figure 9. Vote on where food security and EDE related policy proposals have or have not been suggested in the assembly

The study also identified a number of long term plans that encompassed information from the EWS. For instance the County Integrated Development Plan for 2018-2022 has disaster management as a priority area. Such steps were key in the planning processes and important in overcoming negative effects of drought on the livelihoods. However, the MCAs were yet to interact with the CIDP by the time of conducting the study. There was also the Annual County

Planning where budgetary allocations were made and drought resilience plans adopted. Most of these plans are developed by the county executive mainly the ward offices vertically to the planning department which also hosts the budget and finance office and only included county assembly on the volition of individual MCAs with no structure to ensure compliance or whip politicians into such discussions.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion in respect to West Pokot and Baringo Counties

This section makes general conclusions for both counties. This is based on the findings discussed in the previous chapter as well as the assessment of specific conclusions for either county.

The study observed that there was the availability of EWS information majorly from the NDMA and KMD documented in written format - this information is periodically accessed by members of the CSG, county executive heads and NGOs via electronic mail. The data from NDMA for instance is generated monthly in the form of bulletins focusing specifically on the two counties; while information from the traditional sources were mostly presented from experiences shared verbally with the key stakeholders. The study concludes that majority of the local politicians did not use information from the EWS to inform their political campaigns and engagements. This is explained by the fact that without knowledge on EWS information bulletins and how they work, politicians' campaigns in West Pokot and Baringo especially the semi-arid zones could not be well packaged.

On the basis of the findings as discussed under chapter three, this study also concludes that the EWS information on drought and food security was not used to proactively engage politicians in the planning phase but in the implementation phase, making it difficult to mobilize political support or goodwill. The only limited aspects of planning as observed only took place when the

situation was deteriorating or at an alarm and in most usual cases at the emergency levels.

On debates on food security in general, the study furthermore concludes that EWS bulletins did not have a significant impact in informing assembly debates especially in addressing drought and other disasters. There were no motions debated on the floor of the house that specifically addressed issues raised in respect to early warning bulletins in the time of carrying out this study. It was noted that most debates carried out at the floor of the counties' houses were more of reactive as compared to preemptive. While the local politicians in the county expressed their willingness to tackle issues of drought and larger food insecurity through investment in research and other scientific forms such as the EWS through the regular bulletins, more should be done to strengthen the existing organs bestowed with the mandate of protecting the institutional memory.

In addition, for the county executive, the study concludes that the fact that the county steering group (CSG) has remained relevant in coordinating disaster response, planning and mobilization of financial and technical assistance



in both counties, their major point of weakness is that the CSG is adhoc in nature and relies on the strength of NDMA and support from the humanitarian organizations and other Non-State Actors. In normal monthly meetings, the attendance is never guaranteed by members because of resource constraints, and even when NDMA convenes the meetings to discuss the issues under the EW bulletins, rarely are the agreed decisions implemented unless in the emergency phase.

Last but not least, the study concludes that the relationship between the executive and the legislature in dealing with EWS and food security is observed as average. Although both

arms of government complement each other in the use of EWS data to come up with effective solutions, the county assembly feels left behind with regard to accessing EWS data in good time. Members of the executive similarly expressed a feeling that politicians may not be ready to consume the EWS data and provide sound policy directions. The specific departments dealing with drought and food security were found to take EWS data seriously. These departments include: water, health, livestock and agriculture. Use of EWS information has however not been mainstreamed to ensure consideration in all county plans hence the departments seem not to work in synergy.

Recommendations for West Pokot County

The respondents were able to propose a number of recommendations that can transform the utility of the EWS information in planning. The recommendations reflect the desired policy changes, structural strengthening of county governance institutions and capacity building. The recommendations are presented below.

i. The County Executive should engage with the MCAs through a formed intra-governmental channel and through policy briefs that can be shared through seminars. The executive arm together with the Non-State Actors should develop simple policy briefs that spell out areas of consideration by MCAs and areas to watch for when either approving sector based policies or budget estimates.

ii. The NDMA and the KMS should strengthen the appropriate MCAs' caucuses and regularly share with them the EWS information. This would help MCAs understand what the county and their respective drought or disaster prone areas faces in terms of food insecurities and hence make informed decisions and timely approval of policies and plans.

iii. Capacity building of politicians and individuals dealing with EWS information and larger food

security issues is still key. This is because the EWS information released to them and well as the policy concepts are highly technical hence the need for all people involved to be well prepared to handle such data with the caution and response required. This would ensure that the formulation and implementation of policies take into account voices and concerns from key stakeholders. Similarly, such capacity building of politicians will result in quality debating at the county assembly hence sound legislations and policies on drought and food security will be adopted.

iv. Creation of a mechanism to ease information dispensation, between the EWS and the community. Regular dissemination of the information through local dialects in local radio stations is important and so are community forums to discuss and absorb such information. The two approaches allow for communities

to participate and gain information that they could use to engage and plan in their own communities.

v. Mainstreaming of EWS in all development plans by the county. This approach would result in "increased utilization of EWS data" hence a step forward towards informing how planning in some parts of West Pokot could best be done. This will guarantee proper planning where emergencies are reduced through midterm and long-term plans that strengthen resilience and offer long term solutions to food insecurity.

vi. Improved coordination on policy and legislative framework on EWS information by both arms of government will result in effective resolution of drought and food security impediments. This will ensure that both arms of government are well equipped and work closely in devising ways to cope with drought and food insecurity challenges forecast by the EWS.

vii. This study recommends capacity building of the departments charged with planning and DRM at the county level and the County Assembly members in order to fully integrate political planning using EWS information.

viii. There is urgent need for the county government to centrally coordinate activities in the food security fraternity. This will ensure that efforts made by other actors including international humanitarian agencies; NGOs and CBOs complement each other in their various projects and prevent cases of duplication of duties. NSAs can help by developing a working strategy for the county to ensure the county government in coordinating the activities does not interfere with the space of such organizations in fulfilling their humanitarian efforts.

Recommendations for Baringo County

The respondents were able to propose a number of recommendations that can transform the manner in which EWS information is utilized in planning. The recommendations reflect desired policy changes, structural strengthening of county governance institutions and capacity building and accountability. The recommendations thus far made are presented below.

i. Training and capacity building of stakeholders in the political planning process at county level. These include elected and unelected politicians and county executive (both appointed and those selected through the county public serve board (recruiting authority). The trainings should be designed to tailor the different levels and nature of challenges facing each team. For the executive, the training should help to open up communication points, diffuse more EWS information and help in the finalization of the relevant policies.

ii. Sensitization of the local community on the importance of drought EWS in political planning. Key informants identified local politicians as

the best policy actors to influence the locals in embracing EWS information. This will push the locals to participate in policies and plans that touch on drought hence making their views known to their political leaders. More so, sensitization will make locals self-aware of the responsibility of their leaders in EWS hence demand accountability.

iii. NSAs should scale up their complementary and oversight programs to include a place for strengthening the concept of EWS and food security. Complementary roles can include lobbying for programme based budgets where increased funding are those funds that are meant to implement recurring recommendations from

the EWS information bulletin. This will make the process of evaluating EWS data more thorough and trigger effective response.

iv. The establishment of a county centre for EWS information sharing is an important pathway for both the county assembly and executive to take. This should be developed within the Disaster Management office. This will also support referrals and should address the danger of duplication in respect to NDMA's EWS. Such a point of information access and sharing will also bring about faster dissemination of data to politicians as well as policy implementers. Members of the public will also be able to access this information through simplified local publications, their phones and also through county fora with local politicians and county officials.

v. Working closely with the NSAs to lobbying for drought and food security improved architecture which picks up from scientific researches and infuses the element of public participation. Lobbying within the county assembly for adoption of sound policies in drought mitigation and management should take up a multi-stakeholder's approach for maximum impact.

vi. The CSG as a transformation structure that brings together both the county government (executive departments that are central to supporting the ending drought emergency initiative) and key service oriented NSAs. Unfortunately the structure doesn't have its role designed within a policy framework (sessional paper No. 08, 2012) for ease of referencing and guidance. Therefore, even though the structure ought to majorly coordinate and conduct follow up of common interventions especially in stress and emergency phases, the same has been perceived to direct or supervise implementation. This has its own consequences including slow planning and 'firefighting' or laxity by key departments to take lead role. The study recommends for the explicit inclusion of the definite role of the CSG in a policy framework in a manner that will synthesize coordination, oversight, learning and integration of knowledge management. A more defined role will also be able to open up room for the inclusion of MCAs into the structure. Their participation is key especially on matters to do with legislation and approval of plans emanating from such structures.

REFERENCES

- Braimoh, A., Manyena, B., Grace A., & Muraya, F. (2018). Assessment of food security early warning systems for East and Southern Africa. Africa Climate Business Plan Series. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group.
- Elung'at, Z. (2014). Barriers to the Application of Famine Early Warning Systems to Drought Crisis Response: A case of Selected Humanitarian Agencies in Kenya. University of Nairobi.
- Food and Agriculture organization. (2006). Assessment of Food Security Early Warning Systems in sub-Saharan Africa. Policy Brief.
- Food Security Monitoring and Early Warning Systems. (2012). International, regional and national examples and Indonesia's application of best practices, Nathan Associates Inc: USAID. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/454781516290787924/Assessment-of-food-security-early-warning-systems-for-East-and-Southern-Africa>
- Koehn, M., Obando, J. & Ouma, C. (2012). Post Drought recovery strategies among the Turkana pastoralists in Northern Kenya.
- Laws of Kenya. (2012). Public Finance Management. National Council for law Reporting.
- Lolentum, T., Mugalavai, M., & Obiri, A. (2017). Impact of Drought on Food Security in West Pokot County, Kenya. School of Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance. Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology.
- Maxwell, D. (2017). Better Warning Systems Famines in the 21st Century? It is not for lack of food. The Conversation.
- Pratt, C. (2002). Traditional Early Warning Systems and Coping Strategies employed by Pastoralist Communities in Northern Province, Kenya. Feinstein International Famine Center. Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. Tufts University.
- UNISDR. (2005). Four Elements of People Centered Early Warning Systems. Fairfax: Public Entity Risk Institute.
- United Nations Women 2017.
- USAID. (2017). Food assistance Fact Sheet in Kenya.
- Verschuere, B. The Role of Public Agencies in the policy Making Process. Rhetoric versus Reality. University College Ghent. 24, 23-46.
- Government of Kenya. (2012). Sessional paper No.8 of 2012 on National Policy for the Sustainable Development of Northern Kenya and other Arid Lands; 'Releasing Our Full Potential'. Government Printers.
- Wanjiku, G. (2011, June 3). Role of Early Warning Systems in food security. The Standard Newspaper.



[The Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jul/21/mockery-of-famine-warning-systems). (2011, July 7). A Mockery of famine early warning systems. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jul/21/mockery-of-famine-warning-systems> Retrieved on 1st February 2018.
Patrick Lang'at, P. (2015, December 7). Governors demand release of 15 billion El Nino funds from the national government. The Daily Nation.

Mutai, E. (2017, January 22). Treasury sets aside 6.2 billion for emergencies in next fiscal year.

Astariko, S. (2017, September 14). Wajir MCAs pass Sh. 4.6 billion budget to tackle drought. The Star Newspaper.

