



# ACTED

Agence d'aide à la coopération technique et au développement.

## Community Linked Early Warning System – Good practices ACTED Uganda, June 2011

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Since 2009, ACTED has been supporting the design, implementation, running and improvement of a Drought EWS in Karamoja. This system consists in monitoring 26 indicators on a monthly basis, 19 of them being collected by community members and from the community (households, kraals, markets). The analysis of the indicators is done at district level and feedback on the conclusion drew by the district heads of department is disseminated at international/national and local level. ACTED and the districts authorities of Karamoja are currently building a system of SMS and radio messages for wide dissemination of warning messages and recommendations to the communities.

A component of community awareness has been put in place and aims at enhancing the understanding and participation of the community into this system. This is achieved through community meetings, drama, songs...

Thanks to the National Disaster Management Policy newly approved by the Government of Uganda, the resources available at district level for DRR are expected to grow and this system will hopefully be entirely run by the local government and communities in a mid-term future.

This system can be called “Community Linked EWS” because of the way it has been designed, involving both and fully the local authorities and local communities from the beginning to the end of the process. Decision making power remains more at district level, as compared with the “Community Based EWS”.

Since the implementation of the project, ACTED has been able to identify a number of lessons learnt:

1. Local authorities tend to push for the establishment of a wide ranging list of indicators which requires a lot of resources (in terms of data collection and analysis) and might confuse the analysis. A shorter list of indicators which can be easily collected and analysed is more efficient and reliable.
2. A few indicators might be found very relevant for the system but if their monitoring is realistically not achievable, a proxy can be used or it should be dropped
3. Sampling a small and representative number of sentinels sites rather than a large number of sites helps to achieve better quality data and to enhance the capacity building of the data collectors in the long term
4. When implementing an EWS in a wide area (region), being innovative and using new technologies helps in fulfilling the need of producing timely warnings
5. Using technology is also a way to enhance the motivation and dedication of the actors involved in the system



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6. Building a culture of resilience at local level takes time and the establishment of a EWS integrated into the local government and communities should address that
7. Involving and training the communities from the very beginning of the project is essential for accuracy of the data, relevancy and sustainability of the system
8. Data quality control system should be designed and implemented concurrently with the design and implementation of the data collection system
9. A system cannot be fully operational and reach the maximum efficiency without historical/baseline data
10. The activities and running cost of the system should be integrated into the work plan and annual budget of the local government so as to ensure sustainability of the EWS.

From what has been proven effective and innovative in the project, ACTED formulated a few recommendations:

1. Do not be too ambitious; consider the level of resources available within the communities and local government from the beginning of the project and build up on this.
2. Use existing chain of communication for flow of data and warning messages
3. Involve all levels (communities, local, national) and all sectors so as to create a demand and ensure that all actors of the EWS are accountable for playing their key role leading to the production and dissemination of timely warning messages
4. Roles and responsibilities of each actor should be very clearly distributed
5. As many synergies as possible should be built with the existing DRR mechanisms so as to make sure that the EWS is well integrated into it and therefore used by the rest of the stakeholders
6. The analysis done should be harmonized, as much as possible, with other risk analysis systems so as to be able to compare results
7. Building partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including private and governmental institutions is essential to enhance the efficiency of the system

This system can be fully sustainable if the national government puts in place a structure at local level which considers the necessary human resources to ensure monitoring of the data collection, analysis of the data, production and dissemination of the monthly Drought Bulletin. Though the cost and time required by these activities are minimal, it is essential that one district officer per district dedicates the first and last weeks of each month to this system, since it is the starting point for an effective DRR approach in Karamoja.