

# Alert

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## Tanzania

# Drought in Northern Tanzania

Geneva, 15 September 2011

### 1. Brief description of the emergency

Tanzania, like most other African countries, is dependent on rain-fed agriculture, with more than 80% of its population depending on subsistence agriculture. Persistent droughts especially in the central and northern regions, have led to repeated seasons of food shortages. Northern Tanzania region is in the same zone with the drought-stricken regions of the Horn of Africa. More than 53 districts in the region (Shinyanga, Mwanza, Mara, Singida, Manyara, Arusha, Kilimanjaro and Dodoma) have been declared by the Tanzanian Government as facing critical food shortages. Like for most of the countries of Eastern and the Horn of Africa, the lingering drought is indeed, becoming the worst drought in memory. Families, both pastoralists and agriculturalists, are going hungry with less than a full meal a day. All over the northern Tanzanian region, crops dried up for another consecutive year, due to insufficient rains in the just-ended 2010-2011 farming “masika” season. The looming hunger has also been exacerbated by drying of water sources.

### 2. Impact

It is estimated that at least more than 3 million people are affected by this drought, hence suffering food shortages. More than 400,000 metric tonnes of grain are needed to help these most-affected regions in northern Tanzania get through the next growing season.

### 3. National and international response

Though the Disaster Management Department has been distributing food to hunger-stricken families in these regions worst affected by drought, the supplies are not yet enough. In Simanjiro District, Manyara Region, for example, there was a first time 1.300 tonnes of maize distributed by the government. But as the situation got more critical, much more is needed, as per the assessment. The district authorities

have appealed for additional food supplies due to the worsening situation brought about by the deepening drought.

The government has also been trying to sell grain from its strategic reserves at the subsidized price of Tshs 50 per kilogram, to help people in the area, but deep poverty means many lack funds to buy even this subsidized food. A portion has also been distributed to families that have no means to purchase it. For people living with HIV and AIDS, the effectiveness of the ARV drugs has been declining due to the diminishing level of nutrition among the patients.

Pastoralists from northern Tanzania have moved into southern regions in search of water and pasture resulting to increasing conflict with the agricultural communities.

#### **4. ACT Alliance response**

The ACT Tanzania forum wishes to supplement the existing efforts through provision of critical emergency supplies of food and water to protect the lives of the affected households from hunger and starvation, targeting the most vulnerable families in the drought affected local communities.

The response will include:

- Food: Provision of cereal (maize), pulses (beans) and cooking oil supplies to last the household up to the next growing season.
- Seeds: Provision of maize and sorghum seeds for planting in the next season. Seed stocks have diminished, as people had to eat the seeds as a survival mechanism.
- Water: Availing affordable and accessible water to the drought affected communities.

Members of the ACT Tanzania forum are: Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT), Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT), Church World Service (CWS), Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service (TCRS), Lutheran World Relief (LWR) and Christian Aid (CA), Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM).

The forum is preparing an ACT appeal to be submitted to the ACT Secretariat by the Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service (TCRS). The emergency response will be implemented by TCRS in collaboration with other AFTZ members, in all affected regions.

**Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to Jean-Daniel Birmele, ACT Chief Finance Officer ([Jean\\_Daniel.Birmele@actalliance.org](mailto:Jean_Daniel.Birmele@actalliance.org)).**

Thank you for your attention.

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