



PAPUA NEW GUINEA DROUGHT, FLOODS AND CONFLICT RESPONSE

SITUATION REPORT • 29 February 2016



Highlights

IOM provides relief to community in Pomio District affected by tribal conflict © IOM 2016 (Aaron Watts-Jones)

■ IOM conducted a weeklong training on conservation agriculture to 110 members of drought affected communities in Jiwaka, Enga and Simbu Provinces.

■ In response to recent flooding and landslides in the Highlands and Momoase regions, IOM prepares to deliver relief to an estimated 1,500 heavily affected households.

■ IOM provides post-conflict relief to a community in Pomio District, East New Britain Province, in the form of shelter, NFIs and food items.

Situation Overview

After months of suffering from an El Nino-driven drought, large parts of the country have experienced torrential rain since early February, exacerbating the existing levels of vulnerability. Heavy prolonged rainfall has caused rivers to swell and hillsides to become saturated with water. The resulting flooding and landslides have affected homes, food gardens, water sources and infrastructure in several provinces of Papua New Guinea (PNG). In particular, many Highland and Momase region provinces have sustained extensive damage during the recent extreme weather.

As patterns of vulnerability continue to remain dynamic, with recent weather extremes somewhat convoluting ongoing programmes, IOM as part of its early recovery interventions following the effects of the El Nino associated drought, has recently conducted a conservation agriculture training, targeting 110 affected farmers in Jiwaka, Simbu and Enga Provinces. The trainings also involved counterparts working for the Department of Agriculture and Livestock from the targeted provinces and was held at the Lalibu station in Southern Highlands Province from 24th to 26th February, 2016.

In light of the recent flooding and landslides, IOM is committed to planning an efficient emergency response targeting the most heavily affected and vulnerable communities in Jiwaka, Simbu and Morobe Provinces. IOM has already conducted initial community assessments in Jiwaka and Morobe provinces and has begun to identify the composition of shelter, NFI and food items per household to be distributed.

An isolated incident of tribal conflict resulted in the displacement of 18 families and death of two people in Pomio district, East New Britain. IOM responded within days following an initial community assessment conducted on 15th February. In close coordination with the Provincial Disaster Centre, IOM delivered post-conflict relief in the form of shelter, NFI and food for all of the 18 displaced families. The displaced Sulka community are convening talks with the perpetrators from the Baining community on a weekly basis and it is hoped that a peace agreement will be reached in the coming weeks. IOM's relief operations constitute a part of a unified UN humanitarian effort in the country.

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IOM RESPONSE



Early Recovery

El Nino Drought Interventions

The conservation agriculture trainings held over three days, involving 110 participants from Jiwaka, Enga and Simbu Provinces covered sessions on pre-dry season, dry season and post-dry season farming strategies focusing on sustainable climate resilient farming methods to enhance levels of food security. Future related activities will involve the registration of 2,000 households for the distribution of 2,000 seed kits across the three provinces targeting the most severely drought affected communities.

Pomio Post Conflict Assistance

Conflict mediation is currently ongoing, with an established 'Peace Committee', including members from warring Sulka and Baining communities of Kokopo District on a weekly basis, with relevant law and order officers chairing meetings. The displaced communities are very eager to resolve the issue and return to their place of origin. In order for the community to reach a durable solution, IOM will apply the 'Community-based Planning' process to facilitate developmental change within their community as part of an ongoing project. This process acknowledges the community's rights to self-determination, empowering them to be the agents of change within their community. Focus will be placed on engaging youth groups in the community, as apathetic youths have been blamed for the conflict.

Beneficiary testimony: "There is hope, the rain is slowly falling again and the borehole will remain beyond the drought to provide an easy supply of water for the Health Centre and the immediate community. Even if it will take time until the crops mature to provide for the community, we are now better prepared to face any climate eventuality. We are happy and thankful for the assistance received from IOM and USAID."

Pomio Post Conflict Assistance

The initial community assessment revealed the level of risk the community is exposed to in regard to poor sanitation and hygiene practices. With no planned water system feeding into the displaced community, the nearby river provides the entire population of 107 people with a source of water. It was revealed from the assessment that no effort was made to purify or sterilize the water. Rather, the community drinks the water fresh, straight from the river. This coupled with the absence of toilet facilities, leaving the community to defecate in the surrounding bush, implicates a serious health risk. The risk of contracting diarrhoea and water-related diseases is of utmost concern. In recognition of these WASH concerns, as part of the household NFI kits, a 25ltr water container was included for safe water transport, treatment and storage. Awareness on safe water management was also conducted, emphasizing the importance of boiling water before consumption. IOM also demonstrated the need for safe refuse and waste management by setting out the plans for a pit latrine.



Food Security

El Nino Drought Interventions

The subsequent flooding and landslides from recent heavy rains have had adverse impacts on food gardens, severely affecting levels of food security in the Highlands and Momase regions. Initial community assessments in Jiwaka and Morobe have been conducted, identifying a great need for food assistance to affected communities. Assessments are expected to determine the same for Simbu with its initial community assessments for flooding and landslides planned for early this week. Over the course of the coming week, IOM will conduct registrations of beneficiaries to identify the affected communities most in need. This will allow for the timely mobilization of funds, thus delivering rapid assistance to affected communities most in need.

Pomio Post Conflict Assistance

Fortunately, some of the food gardens of the displaced community have remained intact allowing a few people to return and harvest crops. The Sinuvit Local Level Government (LLG) supplied food aid at the beginning of February but have not returned with any further assistance to date. The surrounding host community also provided donations of food and non-food items in the form of saucepans, cups and plates. IOM responded to the immediate food shortages by providing each affected household with a PNG standard 1-month food basket, including: 20kg rice, 4litres of cooking oil and 5kg of tinned fish.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

El Nino Drought Interventions

The installation of boreholes is part of IOM's strategy to secure reliable, safe water sources for drought affected communities in the Highland Provinces. With four boreholes already functional and in use, the effects have been life changing to the affected communities. Alo Karato, officer in charge of the Longap Health centre in Enga Province has witnessed the transformation this initiative has had on his community first hand.

Beneficiary testimony: "I had to close down the maternity and surgical ward in my clinic, after an agonizing year without water. I would have never imagined that El-Niño would make me take one of the most difficult decisions in my life. This Health Centre serves 15,800 people, and being the only facility for 2,500 people in the immediate area, is accessible after an hour walk, with the other community members walking for about 6 hours to get here."

IOM was able to implement the "Enhancing Climate-resilient Agriculture and Water Supply in Drought-affected Communities in Papua New Guinea (AGWA) Project" thanks to the contribution of the USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance. The project helped the Longap Health Centre and the surrounding community to construct a borehole to access safe resilient water and conducted a training on climate-resistant farming techniques. A community health programme was also launched with community members trained in water sanitation and hygiene practices.

IOM RESPONSE

Shelter

Flooding and Landslides



Bridge in Morobe Province completely destroyed by floods
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IOM has conducted initial community assessments in North Wagi District, Jiwaka Province, targeting communities that suffered greatest damages from recent flooding and landslides. The assessments revealed that 326 people have been affected, with a total of 1,014 gardens lost. The Jiwaka Provincial Disaster Coordinator estimates that a total of 2,051 people have been affected and 12 houses have been destroyed by the floods and landslides within the province alone. Morobe Province has also experienced serious damages from flooding and mudslides. IOM in collaboration with Morobe PDC and LLG Council administrations carried out assessments in Markham and Bulolo districts on 23-24 February respectively. The assessments revealed that some 5,879 people have been affected and 963 houses have either been damaged or destroyed by the flooding and mudslides. In response to this crisis, IOM together with local authorities, is preparing for a humanitarian relief operation.

El Nino Drought Interventions

Jiwaka, Simbu and Morobe Province have sustained serious damages from flooding and landslides affecting homes, food gardens, water sources and infrastructure. Recent assessments in the affected communities within these provinces have highlighted an urgent need for shelter assistance, as many homes have been damaged or destroyed. The findings from the initial community assessments so far have highlighted Morobe Province as having sustained greatest damages in terms of households affected. Timely mobilization of resources will ensure the suffering of affected communities is somewhat alleviated with the delivery of shelter and NFI kits.

Pomio Post Conflict Assistance

Having conducted a focus group discussion with the displaced Sulka community, Shelter and NFI (including WASH items) assistance was identified as the main source of relief requested. In pursuance of these requests the composition of the NFI kits were as follows: 3x tarpaulins; 1x 25 liter water container; 1x aluminium dish; 1x nuigini pot; 6x stainless steel plate; 6x PVC bowl; 6x mugs; 2x rainbow bags; 6x knives; 6x spoons; 2x blankets and 1x 25m rope. The 18 displaced families received one of these Shelter, NFI kits each.

CCCM

Pomio Post Conflict Assistance

Due to the protracted nature of tribal conflicts, the duration of displacement will remain unclear. As such, IOM suggested the establishment a 'Care Centre Committee' that was eagerly accepted by the community. The committee includes individuals from the aforementioned Peace Committee. This committee will act as a collective voice on behalf of all the affected community members. A complaints/concern mechanism was established, which enables all issues raised by the community be fed to the LLG Manager, who then processes and passes the information on to the PDC and relevant District authorities. The committee identified a number of priorities, including the need for safe spaces for young children suffering from malaria, lactating and pregnant women, and construction of a pit latrine for safe waste and refuse disposal. With recent shelter provisions the community will be able to re-plan the site's layout allowing for more space and privacy, instilling a sense of dignity.

IOM is committed to ensuring a well-coordinated and efficient response to the on-going effects of the El Niño system, and as such remains engaged in WASH, Health, Nutrition and Inter-Cluster meetings as well as the Disaster Management Team meetings.



Communities displaced by floods in Morobe Province
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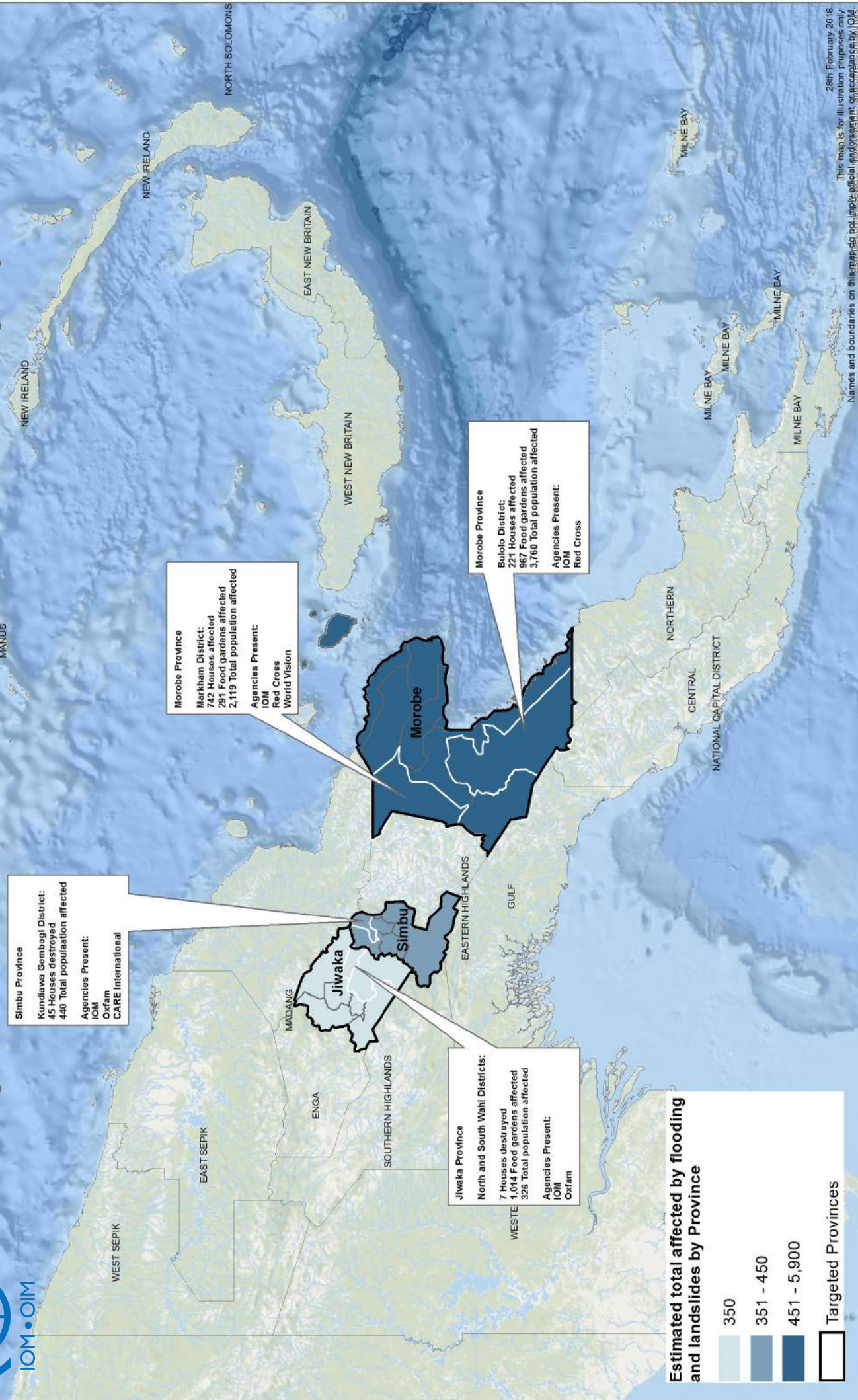
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Papua New Guinea

Flooding and Landslide Affected Communities in Need of Emergency Relief



28th February 2016
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