EARLY WARNINGS, EARLY WARNERS, EARLY RESPONSE

Reflections on Tete (1989) and Southern Africa (1992)

INTRODUCTION

I. EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

A. Satellite Photo Interpretation/Weather Interpretation (Availability and Adequacy)

B. Bottom Up Data Aggregation (Zonal, National)
   - Crop Projections/Outcomes
   - Market Surveys (Quantity Price)
   - Health - Morbidity, Underweight (Malnutrition)

II. DEMAND, SUPPLY, LOGISTICS BALANCES

A. Domestic Production
   - Total
   - Producer Consumed
   - Marketed
Imports

- Commercial - Known Channels
  - ‘Border Traffic’
- Committed Food Aid

Stocks

BALANCE (National-Zonal-Urban-Rural)

B. Response To Imbalance

- Commercial Purchases (Finance)
- Emergency Appeal

III. WATER - THE FORGOTTEN FACTOR

- Sporadic Inclusion (e.g. UNICEF Southern Africa 1992)
- Can cause more dislocation than food production fall if logistics for food aid OK
TETE PROVINCE 1989

A. Road to Dearth
   
   • 1997/98 Crop Failure (Rainfall/Civil War)
   
   • Blockage Urban Food Aid (bureaucratic)

B. Early Warning
   
   • Provincial Calamities Commission

C. Early Non-Response
   
   • FAO - no drought/'normal' rainfall
   
   • UN Provincial Food Aid Coordinator - annual leave as warning given
   
   • Confusion

D. Rapid Reassessment
   
   • Finance Ministry exploration team
   
   • Horrified Report
   
   • Finance to PM to President
   
   • UNICEF to UNDP to New York
E. Results

- 6 months 600 tonnes/6 weeks 6,000

- Bureaucratic Snag, with EU cleared

- Vehicles ‘found’

- ‘Compulsory Unloading’ food to Malawi (official or unofficial averted)

- 20,000 do not die
SOUTHERN AFRICA (1992): The Great Drought (91-92), The Great Dearth (92-93), Averting The Great Death (92-93)

A. THE GREAT DROUGHT 1991/92

- Precursor Years
- Reserve Movements
- 1991/92 Rains
- Course of War
- Limited Commercial Import Capacity

B. EARLY WARNINGS - THE FOUR HORSEMEN MOUNT TO RIDE

- National - Zimbabwe, Zambia, Namibia, Mozambique
- Regional - SADC Food Security Unit
- Concerned - UNICEF/WFP (Maputo), NGO's, Jan Pronk, Others

E. THE TOXIN SOUNDS

- EU (Brussels) with Pledges
- NGO/UNICEF/SADCC
• “It may indeed to too late... if we do not even try history will not forgive us nor should it”.

• 3,000,000 lives at risk

F. RELATED EARLY RESPONSE

• FAO/WFP (plus UNICEF) assessment moved June to March

• Accept National/SADCC Data (April)

• Detailed Regional/National Need Analysis

• UN-SADCC Pledging Conference (June)

• SADC/SA Logistics Coordination

G. RESULTS

• Food Flows

• Reaches Mozambique Ports and Zimbabwe Field Distribution Centres 5 to 10 days before stocks and other flows would have run out

• Only one arterial port route clogs (Durban - and why)

• Rural Water Dislocated Higher than Food 2 cities/municipal zones of 1 million each within fortnight of evacuation before new rain flows arrive

• Varied ad hoc Distribution Systems

• 2,800,000 do not die - 200,000 almost all where war impeded delivery
H. BUILDING ON SUCCESS

- Donors pat selves on back as sole authors of success

- Near deadly lay in response overlooked

- Future water strategy and basic vulnerability reduction the 2 cities not achieved (much less implemented)

- River Basin Water Allocation Conventions Begun (SADCC)

- Systematic Work For Food Standby and National Interim Stock Build-up Not Financed

WHAT IS TO BE DONE

A. Early Warning

B. Analysis

C. Outcry

D. Joint (Regional Action) - Analysis, Outcry, Negotiation, Logistic

E. National System Preparation
   • Works Programmes (Standby)
   • Food Sales To Finance Emergency Works Jobs
   • Focus National and Domestic Social Sector Institutions
   • Phasing Northwestern NGO’s Out of Major Roles

F. • Include Water
   • Include Future Vulnerability Reduction (in Works Done, in Interim Stock Building)

- R H Green

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