



## Droughts

<b>Causal phenomena</b>	<p><i>Immediate cause</i>-Rainfall deficit</p> <p><i>Possible underlying causes</i>-El Niño (incursion of warm surface waters into the normally colder waters of South American Pacific); human induced changes in ground surface and soil; higher sea surface temperatures; increase of atmospheric carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases.</p>
<b>General characteristics and effects</b>	<p>The reduction of water or moisture availability is temporary and significant in relation to the norm.</p> <p>Meteorological drought is the reduction in rainfall and hydrological drought is the reduction in water resources.</p> <p>Agricultural drought is the impact of drought on human activity influenced by various factors: the presence of irrigation systems, moisture retention capacity of the soil, the timing of the rainfall and adaptive behavior of the farmers.</p>
<b>Predictability</b>	<p>Periods of unusual dryness are normal in all weather systems.</p> <p>Rainfall and hydrology data must be carefully analyzed with influencing factors in predicting drought, however, advance warning is usually possible.</p>
<b>Factors contributing to vulnerability</b>	<p>Poverty; location in an arid area where dry conditions are increased by drought.</p> <p>Farming on marginal lands, subsistence farming</p> <p>Lack of agricultural inputs to improve yields</p> <p>Lack of seed reserves</p> <p>Areas dependent on other weather systems for water resources</p> <p>Areas of low soil moisture retention</p> <p>Lack of recognition and allocation of resources to drought hazard</p>
<b>Typical adverse effects</b>	<p>Reduced income for farmers; reduction of spending from agricultural sector; increase in price of staple foods, increased inflation rates, deterioration of nutritional status, famine, illness, death, reduction of drinking water sources, migration, breakup of communities, loss of livestock.</p>
<b>Possible risk reduction measures</b>	<p>Drought and famine early warning systems</p> <p>Development of inter-institutional response plan</p>
<b>Specific preparedness measures</b>	<p>Development of inter-institutional response plan</p>
<b>Typical post-disaster needs</b>	<p>Measures to maintain food security: price stabilization, food subsidies, employment creation programs, general food distribution, supplementary feeding programs, special programs for livestock and pastoralists, complementary water and health programs; rehabilitation</p> <p>Measures to maintain food security: price stabilization, food subsidies, employment creation programs, general food distribution, supplementary feeding programs, special programs for livestock and pastoralists, complementary water and health programs; rehabilitation</p>
<b>Impact assessment tools</b>	<p>Nutritional surveys, socioeconomic surveys, monitoring of rainfall and hydrological data, satellite imagery.</p>