

# The humanitarian response to the 2015-16 El Niño event in Papua New Guinea

Drought and Famine Relief in PNG 2015-16  
Crawford School of Public Policy

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# Introduction

- Flow of information during the 2015-16 El Niño
- Who were the actors?
- Access and dissemination of information
  
- Local >> Regional >> National >> International
- International >> National >> Regional >> Local

# Actors

- UN Agencies: UNDP, WFP, UNICEF, FAO, IOM, OCHA
- Donors: DFAT, ECHO, Japan, US, NZ
- PNG government: National Disaster Centre, Department of Agriculture and Livestock, Department of Prime Minister and National Executive Council
- NGOs: Care, Oxfam, World Vision, Save the Children
- Church Partnership Programme (CPP) and churches
- Private sector: Ok Tedi Development Foundation, Digical
- Sub-national: Provincial governments, Provincial Disaster Offices, LLGs, Districts (DDAs) and Wards
- Other actors: ANU academics, media, individuals

# Village

- Local groups asked for support from Ward Councillors and MPs
- Facebook groups
- Ward Councillors provide reports to Provincial Disaster Coordinators
- Limited advice or support received from provinces

# Provincial

- Many reports received from Wards
- Limited capacity to do assessments or provide support
- Some PDCs sought support from NDC or international actors

# National

- NDC released assessment reports (October 2015)
- ANU food needs maps released (Dec 2015)
- WFP/NDC telephone survey conducted (Feb 2016)
- Bimonthly meeting of DMT and FSC meetings
- Many reports received from NGOs, churches, provincial governments
- Church Partnership Program (CPP) supported response of mainline churches

# International

- Operational decisions run out of regional office in Bangkok office for some UN agencies
- Head offices had authority over donor decisions
- OCHA played integral role in securing UN CERF funding

# James Komengi – United Church

- Worked in Hela Region, raised awareness, conducting assessments, raising funds
- Conducted assessment in Sep 2015 (UC)
- Further assessment in Mar 2016 (CPP)
- Interviewed by ABC in April 2016
- Contracted by Care in August 2016





# National Weekender

FRIDAY, JANUARY 22, 2016

## LIFESTYLE

Killer crocodile slain >P18



## HEALTH

Women's cancer walk >P16



## TRAVEL

Defence boss checks >P17



## Sally Lloyd

- Began as a volunteer raising awareness and funds in Western Province
- Appeared on front page the National newspaper in Jan 2016
- Contracted by WFP from June 2016 to coordinate emergency food relief

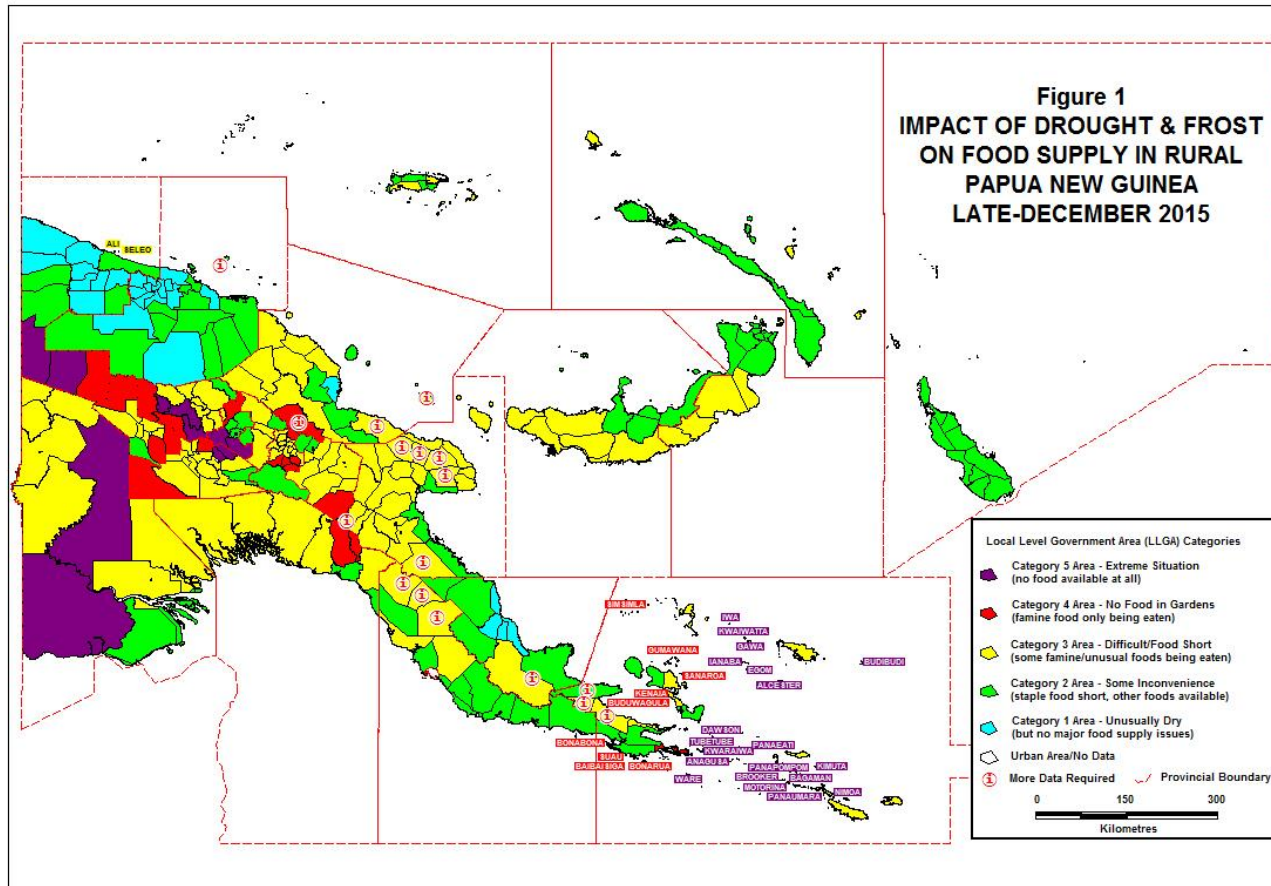
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Canberra-based actors

R.M. Bourke and others from ANU created the first national map of drought affected areas in December 2015

## Enga and Hela Provinces

- United Church foods needs assessment (Sep 2015)
- CPP/UC food needs assessment (March 2016)
- WFP mVAM assessment corroborated findings
- Food aid commenced in June 2016
- UN Central Emergency Response Fund (US\$3.9m)
- WFP/CARE delivered food to 144,000 people





# Western Province

- Food aid commenced April 2016
- South/Middle Fly food distribution supported by DFAT
- North Fly food distribution by WFP
- OTDF funded food
- South and Middle Fly CPP assessment

# Milne Bay Province

- Milne Bay Prov Gov conducted assessment (Nov 2015)
- Milne Bay Prov Gov food distribution (Oct 2015 and Dec 2015/Jan 2016) using reallocated funds from Cyclone
- WFP mVAM report released May 2016
- UN/WFP food aid from August 2016 (73,000 people)
- Many reports from Wards to LLGs and Provincial Government
- Limited communication between Province and NDC

# Observations

- International and national response too slow
- Huge information gap between national and village levels
- Difficult to obtain 'on the ground' information
- Distrust of local information
- Closure of OCHA office in 2015
- Lack of seed availability



# Lesson learning mechanisms

- NDC post-drought rapid assessment (Sept 2016)
- CERF After Action Review (Nov 2016)
- Food Needs Assessment manual published
- 2015-16 El Niño Response Highlands Lessons Learnt Workshop May 2017 (Care International)
- National El Niño Preparedness meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30 May 2017 (NDC, UNDP)



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