General Questions

- Richard Muchena. Im the GRC Forecast based Financing delegate based in Hargeisa, Somali land. I am supporting the SRCS to undertake the Forecast based Financing project. The project aims to develop Anticipatory Actions that will counter forecastable hazards such as drought, flooding, cyclones and epidemics.

Local context

- Due to the recurrent droughts, the water sector in Somalia/Somaliland has been greatly impacted. This relates to water shortages (quantities) then also reduced water quality. The main response activities that have been adopted to address the current water crisis are berked rehabilitation (SRCS), water trucking (other agencies), distribution of water purification tablets (SRCS), multi purpose cash, awareness campaigns related to hygiene promotion (SRCS). Regarding Anticipatory actions, there has been any actions yet due to the fact that there is no water monitoring and trigger mechanism in place. Assistance/response is based on the initial prioritization of target areas that SRCS conducts. The prioritization is based on assumed vulnerability per community based on Number of IDP camps in the area, number of women headed families, predicted IPC classifications etc. Activities such as berked rehabilitation are done in consultations with the communities and SRCS branches who flag/identify berkeds in need of repairing. Repairing may consists of re roofing/ roofing, and brickwork to strengthen the structure. The berkeds are meant to capture run off water in case of rainfall incidences. In cases where there hasnt been rains for a prolonged time then water trucks are deployed to deliver water to the communities. Cash has been an imoortattn modality to adress the water shortages. In the current prevailing drought, water and food insecurity crisis, water is now being sold by private players. So the cash has come in handy to t least enable the communities to buy fresh water for drinking. Water sources such as dug wells are often contaminated as livestock i,e camels, goats also drink water from those same water bodies as well.

Anticipatory Actions

Based on your experience, are water levels in berkads good indicators for drought impacts on the community? Could the indicator be enhanced by local knowledge?

- Water levels in berkeds could be a good indicator, however it cannot be a stand alone indicator. This has to be combined by meteorological forecasts and local knowledge as well.

The ultimate anticipatory action would be the trucking of water to those who need it most. Going further, one could think about other anticipatory actions that could be triggered beforehand such as awareness raising, information dissemination and involving private berkad owners.

What do you think about these proposed Anticipatory Actions? Which potentials and challenges do you see?

- Awareness raising and information dissemination should be more on informing the communities on how to improve water quality at local level e,g boiling before drinking. Involving private berked owners is also feasible however their involvement could be limited as they are more concerned about their business models i.e selling of the water and preserving their berkeds than being part of the overall response/Anticipatory action mechanism. Nevertheless there is the potential to work closely with the private berked owners. This can be done through rehabilitation of their privately owned berkeds in return for their involvement in response and anticipatory action activities related to addressing water shortages.

Do you possibly have other, more specific or different ideas for Anticipatory Actions?

yes, i) timely distribution of cash to enable communities to buy and stock fresh water
ii) timely distribution of water purification tablets
iii) timely rehabilitation of other water sources such as boreholes

Monitoring

Which water level categorisation do you think as useful? (e.g. how many categories?) How detailed does it need to be in order to be useful and how coarse does it need to be to remain monitorable?

- These water levels are ideal i.e
    - Empty (no water at all)
    - Critical (1 day of water supply remaining),
    - Low (3 days of water supply remaining),
    - Middle (5 days of water supply remianing)
    - High (full capacity)

Which water level category should trigger which Anticipatory Action?

- Low category

Which parameters should be monitored weekly, monthly or even only annually?

- Water level (daily monitoring)
- Berked condition (annually)
- Number of people accessing the water form the berked (weekly/monthly)

Water Quality

Can you think of ways in which water quality could be included in the monitoring process?

- Water quality is difficult to monitor at community level as it is a technical activity. Unless if the SRCS through the branch staff are equipped with water testing equipment as well as training them on the water parameters to be tested.

Do you know of any solutions that have proven effective for local water quality monitoring by volunteers in your given circumstances?

- I'm not aware of any.

Resource limitations

How do you currently decide which community to help when resources are scarce?

- The SRCS in consultation with the government select target communities based on a pre existing selection /vulnerability criteria based on either number of IDP camps etc

What are your experiences? - What would be good ways to deal with potential loss of trust and frustrations in the moment and possibly beforehand?

- Utilise the community based SRCS volunteers to engage communities and sensitise the communoties on the riole the SRCS plays. Also establishing a robust feedback and Complaints mechanism that ensures communities can easily relay their feedback.

What other challenges do you see in regard to resource limitations?

- The current crisis is huge and response activities are being overwhelmed by the need. This will lead to commercialization and overpricing of fresh water.

Berkads

In the beginning of the mapping and monitoring of Berkads, their location and related key information shall be captured. Determined key information are so far:

- *the location,*
- *ownership,*
- *total number of people or communities dependant on the berkad,*
- *its water storage capacity and*
- *functioning*

Which other social, technical or context related indicators, parameters or features would you add to this list of important information about Berkads in regard to Anticipatory Actions? Which challenges might arise in the capturing or monitoring of these information on site?

- Other information might included the year it was built, the last time it was rehabilitated etc. However this kind of information might be missing as you need people with community/institutional memory to provide such kind of information. Somalis are highly mobile communities and it will be difficult to get information on past details per particular geographical area.

Does the community have an idea of how long the water of their water sources will last? How good is this prediction usually?

- Yes they have an idea. These kinds of predictions are good as communities usually have their own control measures to ensure equitable distribution of water e,g how many containers per family etc. The berkeds are usually locked to ensure there is controlled acess to the water stored.

Water Trucking

How does the trucking of water currently work? On what information do you act?

Which roles (e.g. funder, executer, manager, etc.) exist and who usually fills those?

What resources (human resources, finances, water, etc.) and how many/much of these are required for one action of water trucking?

How does the availability of water trucking is spread across Somaliland? Are there certain water points that are used for that?

How long is the average response time from getting the information to the filling?

Final remarks

Would you like to share additional experiences, lessons learnt or other key points?

- It is proving to be a challenge to plan for anticipatory actions in an already prevailing crisis in Somalia/Somaliland. Already the needs are dire and the current SRCSs focus is on response mechanims to adres the already visible impacts of drought.

Is there anything else you would like to add or any final thoughts you would like to share before we conclude the questionnaire?

- water monitoring is vital as it will inform decision makers on the priority areas to focus on. Community level water monitoring plus weather forecast information will help form robust Anticipatory Action systems as well as informed response mechanism