



# UPDATES AND NEWS

## FROM THE NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT CENTRE

The National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) is hard at work in executing its legislative obligations by promoting an integrated and coordinated system of disaster management amongst national, provincial and municipal organs of state, statutory functionaries and other role players involved in disaster management. Since January this year, the NDMC has been involved in a number of projects and initiatives to realise this objective. This journal provides me with the opportunity to provide a high level update to stakeholders on the activities of the NDMC during this period to reflect on some key aspects.

### Drought management

The recurring drought and its impact has largely dominated the agenda of the NDMC. Since October 2015, the NDMC, through the National Joint Drought Coordination Committee (NJDC), essentially played a supporting role to the affected provinces and local governments in the management and coordination of the drought. However, since 13 February 2018, national government, through the NDMC, took over the primary responsibility for the management and coordination of the drought, when I reclassified the drought as a national disaster. Our joint efforts intensified when the Minister declared a national state of disaster on 14 March

2018. The declaration of a national state of disaster enabled the respective spheres of government to mobilise and reprioritise resources in their existing allocations, expedite procurement processes and accessed R433,524 million from the respective disaster grants to implement augmentation and other immediate relief projects. Of this amount, R348,836 million was transferred during 2017/18 financial year and R84,678 million was transferred from the Provincial Disaster Grant during 2018/19 financial year.

During the ensuing months, the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Drought and Water Scarcity provided decisive leadership to oversee the implementation of projects aimed at addressing the immediate impact of the drought. In this regard, Government-led multi-disciplinary measures implemented effectively mitigated the droughts' effects and together with good rain, falling in the late autumn and early winter, broke the back of the drought. The IMTT made it clear that drought remains a perennial feature of the Republic's ecological system and evidence is mounting that droughts of the future will be aggravated by climate change and climate variability. Given the latter view, government is already taking concerted action through the introduction of the Climate Change Bill and the Climate Smart Agricultural Strategic Framework for public comment. Stakeholders are urged to peruse



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these documents, provide input and start with the conceptualisation of the principles these documents embody to ensure that the impact of climate change is mitigated and adapted to. The following aspects were highlighted pertaining to the drought.

1. The Western Cape recorded favourable amounts of rainfall. However, several pockets of dryness remain in the province, the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and North West. Early predictions, albeit with low confidence, shows incidents of above

According to DMISA's approved professional registration process, disaster management officials are required to sign the following "Pledge", before they are registered to practice:

- "That I will diligently abide with the DMISA Code of Conduct for the Disaster Management profession, which I have signed with my application for professional registration and will strive to adhere to the requirements of the DMISA Code of Practice for Disaster Management practitioners".
- That I will endeavour to reduce disaster risks through reducing hazards and vulnerability and increasing capacity, sustainability and resilience in line with national, regional and international imperatives expressed in national legislation, international agreements and standards and international best practice.

- That I herewith affirm my commitment to the principles of the Humanitarian Charter as well the minimum standards contained therein that aims to achieve levels of service as stipulated in the 1949 Geneva Convention and their Additional Protocols of 1977 as well as other international conventions, protocols and legal and legislative instruments for the improvement and alignment of disaster risk reduction, preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation initiatives.
- "That I will always strive to uphold the above principles and commitments both in my official and private capacity".

To leave you with some food for thought, I believe that South Africa will benefit greatly by recognising DMISA as the 'Professional' body to regulate competent

disaster management professionals for the country. I am pleased to share that DMISA is in the process to officiate memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with three institutions namely the NDMC, SALGA as well as UN:ISDR. This will certainly be beneficial to all three these organisations, if they recognise DMISA as the Disaster Management Professional Body and these officials employed in the field complies with the required legal and practical knowledge, skills and experience, to competently implement disaster management in the country.

As usual I convey my acknowledgement and sincere appreciation to all who have contributed toward this edition. Again, also a special word of thanks to our editor and publisher, Lee Raath-Brownie, for her continued support and delivery of world class disaster management publication.



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- ▶ normal temperatures forecast for the summer with early incidents of El Niño conditions for the summer rainfall areas. This calls for heightened resilience building measures to be implemented.
  - 2. Relief from the severe drought conditions is evident over the central to the south eastern part of the country. Dam levels observed in the April – May – June period, pointed to an improvement in dam levels in the Western Cape and parts of the Northern Cape.
  - 3. Funds allocated in March 2018 for the three critical Cape provinces and additional funds was finalised from the R6 billion provision allocated.
  - 4. A water and sanitation master plan, ‘A call to action’ was endorsed by cabinet on 4 July 2018. The plan stands in five key objectives and enablers and is geared at promoting the water mix for all sectors with an objective to enable growth and development.
  - 5. The integrated interactions led by the IMTT are yielding benefits to mitigate the efforts of drought. The measure of rainfall conditions (SPI) and vegetation conditions (VCI) show improvements particularly in the Western Cape.
  - 6. There are on-going communication and awareness measures rolled-out by various departments and provinces.
  - 7. Integrated environmental interventions within the context of climate change adaptation and water resources management are also in progress. This focuses on clearance of listed invasive species such as Prosopis targeting highly impacted areas of the country.
- Given the above, the lapse of the national state of disaster on 13 June 2018 does not automatically extend to the lapse of the classification of the drought as a national disaster. As such, the national executive, with the support of provincial and local government, remains responsible to manage and coordinate the disaster in terms of existing legislation and contingency

arrangements until an assessment of the magnitude and severity of the disaster indicate that the occurrence should, in terms of Section 23 of the Act, no longer be regarded as a disaster. This effectively ushers in the resilience building phase of the drought.

This entails, amongst others, improving the identification, funding, coordination and management of resilience building projects aimed at increasing resilience and reducing vulnerability to drought. To achieve this, the NDJCC has broadened its focus beyond the continual monitoring of resilience building projects to include focussed projects, funded from the allocations of the respective organs of state, in the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) aimed at the identification and implementation of Disaster Risk Reduction projects such as:

- a) Augmenting the water supply to levels where future demand can be met without imposing restrictions
- b) Mainstreaming water conservation and demand management within communities to reduce consumption per capita to that of international norms
- c) Adapting farming practices aimed at mitigating the effects of drought and increasing the resilience of the farming sector
- d) Performing research to find implementable adaptable solutions to increase resilience to drought eg developing alternative resilient crop seeds that are drought tolerant and heat tolerant
- e) Re-evaluating and reinforcing drought policies across government by incorporating the lessons learned during the acute phase of the drought
- f) Addressing backlogs and fast tracking the implementation of bulk water projects
- g) Through deployment of existing local government recovery plans, the Back to Basics (B2B) programme and the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent (MISA), strengthen the capacity of

municipalities to carry our infrastructure development and maintenance inclusive of operations and maintenance to eliminate water losses.

### Resuscitation of the Heads of Centre’s Forum

The NDMC last year took the decision to resuscitate the Heads of Centre Forum (HoCeF). This forum enables myself to engage on a quarterly basis with the nine provincial heads of centres on operational matters to increase intergovernmental coordination and cooperative governance on matter relating to disaster management. Key aspects such as the alignment and implementation of operational plans, compliance to the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (DMA), reports on response action taken etc contributes to the improvement agenda.

### Vibrant National Disaster Management Advisory Forum

The National Disaster Management Advisory Forum (NDMAF) provides a mechanism for role players to consult one another and coordinate their actions on matters relating to disaster management. The NDMAF has consistently met since its inception in 2002 and through this established a firm basis to, amongst others, mainstream disaster risk reduction and build resilience. The NDMAF is becoming more vibrant through the application of three key principles. The first principle is to request the NDMAF members to systematically ‘report’ on progress made in terms of their programmes and how it implements the DMA. The second principle is for the NDMAF to ‘reflect’ on the reported progress. The third principle is advise the organ of state, where applicable, on measures that may be taken to ‘reinvigorate’ or rejuvenate the efforts of the organ of state in realising the objectives of the DMA. This mantra is finding application in the broader work performed by stakeholders in disaster management and together with the ‘Thuma Mina’ or ‘send me’ Campaign announced by the President in his state of the nation address is proving a powerful combination to advance the disaster risk management agenda.

### Successful SADC workshop on DRR in March

In March the Southern African Development Community (SADC) secretariat hosted a regional disaster risk reduction (DRR) conference to review progress achieved by the SADC Regional DRR programme towards the goal of managing uncertainty, reducing vulnerability and building resilience for SADC member states and communities in view of the global and regional frameworks that guide DRR, resilience and sustainable





Successful SADC workshop on DRR held in March 2018

► development. The conference attracted a diversity of participants given the nature and relevance of disaster risk reduction including but not limited to SADC member states both at technical and senior officials level, United Nations agencies such as United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), World Health Organisation (WHO), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) etc, international cooperating partners and major donors such as Department for International Development (DFID), Skills Development Corporation (SDC), European Union (EU) the World Bank etc, international non-governmental organisations such as Oxfam, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) etc, academia and private sector institutions. This broad participation provided strengthened awareness of existing and emerging knowledge exchange platforms for DRR and resilience in the region. We recognise the significance and value of financial, technical and academic partnerships demonstrated throughout this conference. During the conference it was recognised that DRR has a number of complexities and that the primary objective should be to make DRR tangible on a local level where the impact and changes within communities can be easily identified.

The conference provided a platform for key international and regional DRR stakeholders to share prominent DRR and resilience initiatives, projects and programmes as part of regional DRR sharing of lessons and experience towards shaping and informing new and upcoming regional resilience programmes aligned to the Sendai Framework for DRR.

The high standard of presentations and panel discussions allowed for diverse views and rich deliberations. Some of the salient issues that were highlighted through the various sessions, include the incorporation of gender-based approaches into all our strategies and programmes, the importance of political buy-in, the need for disaster risk assessments to be forward looking and not only focus on our current risks, on being responsive to early warnings, the critical role of ecosystems and environmental conservation and resilient spatial and urban planning in promoting DRR in the region. The cross-cutting theme on the relationship between DRR and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) was also highlighted and the need to look at all the dimensions and integration between DRR and CCA across the different sectors and areas, has been reiterated.

I believe we have increased our conceptual understanding of the disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management as opposed to business as usual disaster response and disaster management.

This conference provided an opportunity for enhanced shared learning through stakeholder experiences through DRR and resilience initiatives, projects and programmes. We shared lessons learned and challenges and also identified opportunities that we should embrace. Going forward, we need to recognise the professionalisation of the function through existing mechanisms such as the professional body (DMISA). We also need to continue strengthening linkages on DRR across sectors, look at ongoing platforms of a similar nature for sustainable networking and collaboration amongst stakeholders to drive the DRR agenda in SADC.

### The technical meeting of the BRICS Joint Task Force for Disaster Management

Building peace and prosperity is a fundamental concept in the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) partnership. A key element is cooperation in disaster management, which can also act as a catalyst for deeper partnerships in other areas of cooperation by BRICS member states. To this end, in April 2016, Russia convened the first meeting of the BRICS heads of national agencies responsible for disaster management. The meeting took place in St Petersburg and resulted in the St Petersburg Declaration, which committed to strengthening mutual cooperation in emergency management and to sharing experiences of protecting lives, livelihoods and properties among BRICS member states. The BRICS ministers responsible for disaster management agreed on a Joint Action Plan.

In August 2016, the Government of India hosted the second meeting on disaster management in Udaipur, Rajasthan. The meeting identified areas of collaboration and cooperation by BRICS member states. The Udaipur Declaration reaffirmed the commitments of the St Petersburg Declaration and established a Joint Task Force (JTF) on Disaster Risk Management and a roadmap for implementing the Joint Action Plan approved in 2016. The JTF consist of one representative from each BRICS member state and is chaired in rotation by representatives of each member state.

In June 2018, the first meeting of the JTF on Disaster Risk Management took place in Buffalo City, Eastern Cape, under the theme of 'BRICS taking action on Sendai Commitments'. It recognised that all BRICS member states face similar challenges in their pursuit of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) goals. The heads of national agencies responsible for disaster management from the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India and the Republic of South Africa attended. The JTF was able to:

- Receive reports on the progress made and challenges faced on the implementation of the Joint Action Plan since its adoption in 2016 under the Udaipur Declaration
- Discuss progress on implementing the roadmap within BRICS member countries
- Adopted a new Joint BRICS Plan and roadmap till 2020
- Shared good practices for implementing the SFDRR
- Developed the draft Buffalo City

Declaration and provide input to the BRICS Leaders' Summit that took place in Johannesburg in July 2018.

### GIS portal enhancing risk profiling and early warning systems

The Early Warnings and Capability Management Systems unit in the NDMC has begun a multiphase approach to establishing an integrated Geographic information system (GIS) portal platform for the NDMC. The project is currently in its third phase, having already completed two previous phases in which the essential architectural design and data model development was completed (Phase1) followed by the phase 2 in 2017 that resulted in the first iterative of actual data and information products being available for the disaster management community. Phase 3 that commenced in the current financial year (2018/19) seeks to further develop new products (drought hazard modelling) and refine existing products developed in the previous cycle. The web portal is anticipated to be an important online repository of information and tools to enable disaster management practitioners to gain access to important spatial data, hazard profile information, community risk assessment tools and current early warnings information such as the latest Fire Danger Index (FDI) for the country. Besides information and data, the web portal also hosts an array of important spatial analysis tools such as self-service mapping measuring instruments and various data manipulation tools.

The completion of a wide user gathering process prior to Phase 1 has ensured that the requirements of provincial disaster management centres (PDMCs) have been incorporated into the long term planning for the web portal platform. During the course of the current financial year, all nine PDMCs will receive a technical session and necessary training in order to use the different products and services. During this training, additional requirements will be noted and incorporated into the future years of the development to ensure that the NDMC keeps abreast of user needs. The directorate is also planning to host various interdepartmental meetings with other GIS units to learn more about the development of web-enabled products and services.

### Impact based early warning system bearing fruits

Severe weather related hazards occur regularly over South Africa (SA) but it is when they impact negatively on humans and their livelihoods, infrastructure or the environment that they can become disastrous. The magnitude of the disaster, though, varies between different places depending on the specific vulnerability of the area. Forecasting

severe weather hazards has improved significantly over the last few decades due to scientific developments in this field. Despite this improvement, accurate and timely warnings of an approaching severe weather hazard does not imply a good response leading to safety of life or prevent major economic disruption.

The Early Warnings and Capability Management Systems Directorate together with the South African Weather Services are currently working on the development of the Impact Based Early Warnings System for South Africa. An Impact-based Early Warning System (EWS) changes the focus of the early warnings from weather prediction to ground based, people-centred risk prediction that is tailored to local conditions. Warning of this nature, takes into account the localised social and structural vulnerability in order to distinguish between less severe and more severe events. Warnings are then customised on these parameters at local level so as to be able to provide an indication of the areas that need immediate intervention due to their increased vulnerability. This is especially relevant in South Africa, due to the fragmented and shared emergency services in different provinces.

The project is currently at an advanced stage with several pilot tests already completed in the different provinces. Both winter and summer rainfall areas were subjected to pilot tests using empirical information to ensure that actual weather related consequences were factored into the testing. The disaster management practitioners and the weather forecasters have been working closely with the different provinces and the various stakeholders to ensure that all elements of severe in their respective areas are considered and planned for in the final product. The South African Weather Services (SAWS) and the National Disaster Management Centre are also

planning to renew their Memorandum of Agreement in 2018, which will further cement these organisations together for a closer working relationship on other thematic areas common to them.

### Launch of the value chain Early Warning Technical Task Team, a breakthrough to manage disaster risk value chain

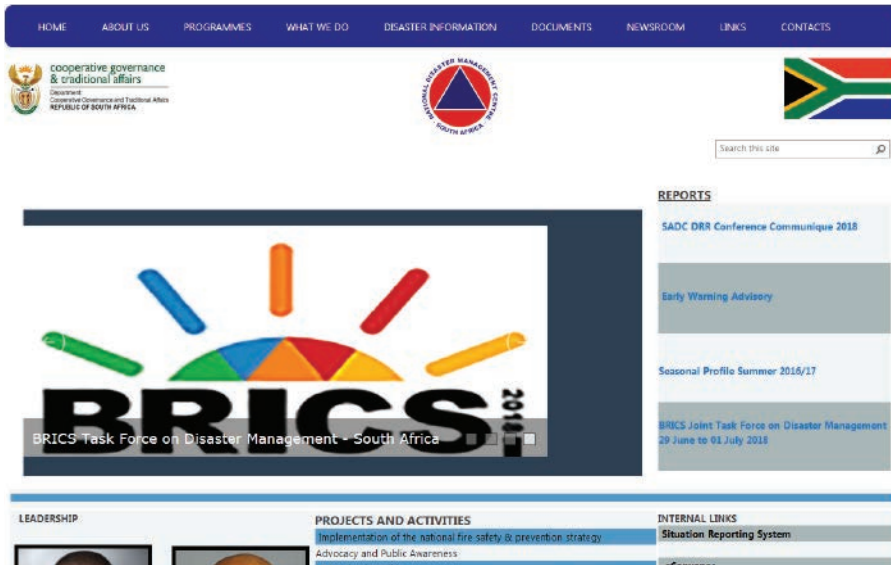
The NDMC, through the NDJCC, has established an Integrated Drought Risk and Early Warnings Technical Task Team (TTT) to gather, analyse and distribute relevant information products and services necessary for the active monitoring of drought risk and other related hazards from an early warnings and mitigation perspective. Aligned with Section 17 of the DMA, the TTT's purpose is to provide spatial data support, drought risk information early warnings products and services.

This TTT currently enjoys the support of several key departments involved in the current drought management process. These include the Council for Geoscience, the Council for Agricultural Research, The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform and the South African Weather Services (SAWS). Each organisation participates in one of several work streams to supply data and information related to their core mandate and together information is shared over several important themes. The objective of the formation of this task team is to ensure that important information is processed and shared in order to inform important disaster risk related discussions on a national scale.

Disaster management implementation Whilst the monitoring and legislative compliance verifications of disaster management centres are ongoing, the need was identified in January 2018 to do a more comprehensive and independent analysis on the progress made with the







► implementation of the DMA and National Disaster Management Framework (NDMF) by PDMCs. The Disaster Management Secretariat (DMS) of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) embarked on a project to develop an inventory of the status, resources, services and implementation of DRM in the region to inform the development of a SADC DRM roadmap. In doing so, a suitable service provider was identified in each SADC member state to produce a comprehensive National Inventory Report (NIR) for the SADC DMS. In South Africa, Resilience Globale was identified and appointed by the SADC DMS to perform the NIR. Closer analysis of the SADC NIR National Inventory Report Project and the envisioned Independent Provincial Disaster Management Compliance Monitoring Project revealed that the two projects had a similar outcome and timeline for completion. It therefore made operational sense to execute the NIR project in partnership with Oxfam to validate the information submitted by the PDMCs to Resilience Globale through in loco visits, whilst also engaging the respective PDMCs on best practices.

The main conclusion derived from the assessment is that many initiatives implemented by sectors in South Africa, are not always associated directly with contributions to DRR. The Department of Environmental Affairs, for example, has numerous projects with a focus on climate change adaptation. When analysing the projects, it became clear that almost all projects contribute to DRR, they just call it something different. The Department Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries and the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform both manage rural development and extension programs, which builds resilience but is internally referred to as 'extension or farmer support'. A big challenge, however, is

the silo approach of departments where each department implements their own strategies and plans without collaboration with other departments.

It also became clear that climate change adaptation may be disproportionately emphasised at the cost of anthropogenic and developmental impacts. As a country, South Africa experiences vulnerabilities due to urbanisation, population growth, population movement, safety and security, crime, poverty and unemployment amongst others. In spite of these, research money and opportunities and projects focus to a large extent on climate change adaptation.

Analysis of the monitoring and legislative compliance data supplied by disaster management centres quarterly have showed that 68 percent of DMCs achieved 90 percent or better against the minimum assessment criteria, whilst 98 percent scored 70 percent or better against the minimum assessment criteria. This indicates that disaster management centres are putting measures in place to address the challenges they may be facing thereby improving their compliance.

Currently, the NDMC has been focussing on closely analysing at least six key aspects reported on in the monitoring and compliance assessment forms submitted quarterly. However, the technology on which the GIS portal platform of the NDMC is based, is providing exciting opportunities for the NDMC, not only in rejuvenating the monitoring and compliance assessment process to focus on all the aspects reported on but, coupled with business intelligence software, will enable the NDMC and PDMCs alike, in the near future, to analyse collected data in a more effective and efficient manner. This will aid the NDMC and PDMCs to focus more attention on not only identifying key aspects that require

support but also to prioritise actions that may yield the best results.

### Disaster management and the incident management system

The NDMC is mandated to ensure the development and institutionalisation of incident management systems (ICS) in order to ensure effective and efficient response to all major occurrences and disasters in the country. The United States of America Forest Services (USFS) has been involved in ICS capacity building in South Africa since 2003. During 5 to 9 March 2018, the USFS presented ICS 100-300 courses to identified key role players in South Africa. A total of 35 officials from the NDMC, provincial disaster management centres, key national sector departments (involved in disaster response) and some municipalities benefited from this important training. The NDMC, building on the work done by the SA ICS Work Group, will be initiating a process to institutionalise a multi-hazard National Incident Management Systems in the country. To this end, a national multi-sectoral committee has been established to drive this process and a clear programme of action with key milestones on how multi-hazard ICS will be institutionalised in South Africa has been developed.

### DCoG Mandate Bosberaad afforded the NDMC to set the tone for its further work on the institutional configuration of the disaster management function in South Africa

The dates 15 to 16 August 2018 saw the staging of the first ever mandate Bosberaad to reflect on its Constitutional mandate, vision, mission and strategic roadmap to give effects to its vision. This platform also provided an opportunity to for the NDMC to adopt a founding statement towards further work on its configuration. This will be taken forward through appropriate processes under the leadership of the Minister.

### Preparations for the National Disaster Management Indaba 2019

A task team on the preparation for the 2019 Indaba has been constituted and will commence with meetings to execute its activities under the leadership of the Head of the National Disaster Management Centre supported by the National Disaster Management Advisory Forum.

Yours sincerely

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