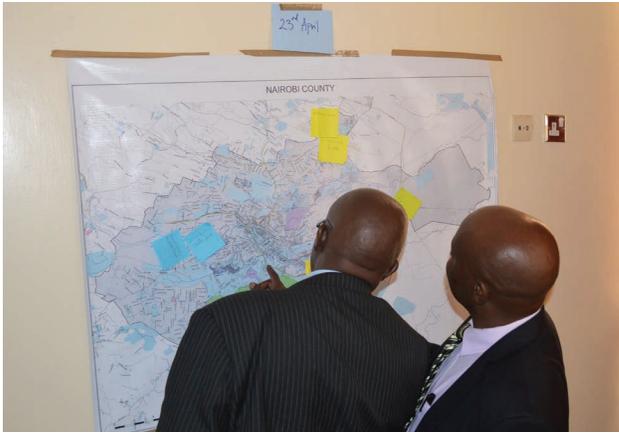


STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP ON FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT IN NAIROBI COUNTY



On 5th June 2018, International Centre for Humanitarian Affairs (ICHA) together with the Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) and Kenya Meteorological Department (KMD) hosted a consultative workshop on flood risk management in Nairobi County, with reflections on the experienced floods in the county during the March to May 2018 ‘Long Rains’ season. The workshop brought together participants from Nairobi City County, National Government, local and international NGOs, the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre as well as the media.

This is part of the ‘Towards Forecast based Preparedness Action’ (ForPac) research project, which aims to improve forecasts of high impact weather and climate events and their impacts, with a focus on flood-related rainfall forecasts in Nairobi County.

During the workshop, KRCS presented an overview of the ForPac project and the Forecast based Ac-

tion (FbA) approach. Emphasis was on the use of forecasts at seasonal, monthly to daily timescales to inform flood risk management decision making and action, in a ready – steady – go response to the forecasts at various times.

Use of forecasts at a range of lead times was reiterated in KMD’s presentation. This is based on project results, which indicate that the accuracy of forecasts for the Long Rains is low, but better information is available in forecasts for single months within the season. Furthermore, advances in scientific understanding show that relatively good forecasts of heavy rainfall events can be made two weeks in advance.

This information, when properly understood, can be used to take action in advance of flood events to minimize impacts and the costs associated with flood damage. However, this is not always the case in Nairobi County. For example, when participants

reflected on occurrences on 14th to 15th March 2018 and 23rd April 2018, more flooding incidents were reported during the March event compared to the April event, even though about the same amount of rainfall was recorded in both events. Flooding in March could have been alleviated if heavy rainfall forecasts issued by KMD had been utilized to place emphasis on fast tracking the funding and action required to clear the drainage systems. The drains were only cleared in the beginning of April, hence the reduced flooding observed in that month.

As next steps, ForPac will work with stakeholders to enhance understanding of the various forecasts that are available, explore with them what forecast information is useful for flood risk management and how this information can support forecast based preparedness actions. As articulated by the Deputy Director for Livestock Production in Nairobi County, “The workshop was an eye opener, and now we need to put the discussions into action.”