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Aligned climate drivers and potential impacts on food security in Ethiopia in 2024

This brief recommends that the Ethiopia Disaster Risk Management Commission, supported by international partners, establish a specialist ENSO-IOD facility to plan for the impact of a drought in 2024.

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{ "@context": "https://schema.org", "author": { "@context": "https://schema.org", "@type": "Person", "name": "Solomon Bogale", "url":

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El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) climate phenomena drive global seasonal rainfall anomalies. In Ethiopia, these anomalies are most pronounced when negative or positive ENSO and IOD phases align. The current El Niño and positive IOD phase alignment threatens heavy spring rains and flooding in Ethiopia’s southern pastoral areas and drought in the central and northern highlands.

Millions of people in the country already need humanitarian assistance because of multiple conflicts, drought and floods. Ethiopia can ill-afford a further spike in numbers. Given the strong association between such spikes and previous ENSO and IOD alignments, this policy brief recommends that the Ethiopia Disaster Risk Management Commission establish a specialist ENSO-IOD facility. Supported by its international partners, this facility can plan for the impact of a drought in 2024 in the central and northern highlands and estimate and resource the additional amount of humanitarian assistance required.

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