

PASSAGE PROJECT NEWSLETTER QUARTER 1 2026 Jan – March



Q1 2026 highlights

- Quarterly Work Package Review Meeting
- Scaling the FOLA Approach to Strengthen Locally Led Anticipatory Action Across ASAL Counties
- Community Radio Training
- Sub-Regional Climate Outlook Forum (Sub-COF5) for IGAD Cluster II
- GHACOF72

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Item 1: Quarterly Work Package Review Meeting



March 6, 2026 (NAIROBI, Kenya) ICPALD in partnership with a diverse team of PASSAGE Project co-implementers has been addressing resilience gaps in transboundary areas of the IGAD region,



using co-produced Anticipatory Action plans to build resilience in vulnerable pastoral communities.

The Q1 project review meeting focused on MEL updates and approaches for harvesting outcomes and evidence. The session also engaged in identifying knowledge products and publications emerging from the project activities.

While opening the session on behalf of ICPALD's Director, Dr. Kathiya, ICPALD's Head of Livestock Development said, "This is the time to accurately depict and show what we have worked on during the last three years".

The team was keen on establishing the link between the research that has been done and the change arising from using the research, depicted in how beneficiary stories are achieving the project objectives. The meeting agreed to showcase the evidence of change by capturing stories of change.

Item 2: Scaling the FOLA

Approach to Strengthen Locally Led Anticipatory Action Across ASAL Counties

March 23-28, 2026 (NAIVASHA, Kenya)

ICPALD, in collaboration with the University of Sussex, has been scaling the Forecasts to Local Action (FOLA) approach to strengthen locally led anticipatory action across Arid and Semi-Arid counties.



During a capacity building session of National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) officers and engagement with ASAL communities, forecasts were translated into timely, community-driven early actions and anticipatory action was institutionalized.

The six-day FOLA training was conducted under the PASSAGE Project implemented by ICPALD, with financial support from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) /Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO). Participants also included field monitors from nine arid counties, technical experts from University of Sussex and University of Nairobi, and ICPALD technical staff.

The forum opened with remarks from the NDMA CEO. ICPALD remarks were delivered on behalf of Dr. Dereje Wakjira, ICPALD Director, emphasizing the need to highlight the importance of strengthening early warning systems and enhancing community-level anticipatory action.

Training sessions focused on strengthening technical capacity, improving data quality, and strengthening linkages between field monitoring and decision-making processes. Participants were introduced to the FOLA framework and the importance of integrating indigenous knowledge with scientific forecasting to support timely early action. Specific areas of training were: Participatory Co-Production and Knowledge Integration, Participatory Scenario Planning, and Forecast Integration and Impact-Based Risk Analysis.

Building on earlier FOLA pilots in cross-border clusters, this training supported the institutionalization and scaling of locally led anticipatory action within national early warning systems. It also strengthened the capacity of NDMA drought field monitors to improve data collection, interpretation of early warning indicators, and translation of forecasts into actionable anticipatory measures.

The training was funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) /Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) through the PASSAGE Project.

Item 3: Community Radio Training

On 20 February 2026, a training was conducted by Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) and MDLG facilitators using the URCS community radio training guide. The training involved rehabilitation and operationalization of community radio for early warning, under repository of possible anticipatory actions (AAs) to address the identified cascading impacts at various lead times, and recommendations for combinations of AAs that would yield the most effective outcomes.



Due to the high vulnerability of cross-border areas to disasters such as droughts, floods, epidemics, and conflicts, and the realization of these communities' wealth of indigenous knowledge and coping mechanisms that remain under-documented. While scientific approaches to DRR and AA provide advanced forecasting and modelling, they often fail to capture community realities and inclusivity. Conversely, indigenous systems are highly localized and trusted but may lack the precision of scientific methods.

The primary goal of the training was to bridge the "information gap" in areas where mainstream media doesn't reach or doesn't speak the local language.

Through the community radios project, the following objectives were set:-

- Provide early warnings and life-saving information in local languages, supporting disaster preparedness and early action
- Strengthen two-way communication between communities, local leaders, and technical agencies (OPM, Dep of Meteorology, MAAIF, District)

- Bridge information gaps in underserved areas where mainstream media does not reach or does not broadcast in the local language. Support collective community action by mobilizing communities around hazards such as drought, animal disease outbreaks, floods, and public health risks.
- Preserve culture and amplify local voices, including women, youth, elders, and marginalized groups.
- Provide accountability platforms, enabling communities to ask questions and engage with local leaders. 2
- Serve as part of the Risk Information & Action Hub, linking early warning triggers with community response mechanisms. 1

Achievements

- Successful selection of radio committees across the three sub-counties
- Training delivered using participatory approaches
- Identification of sites for community radio installation
- Improved understanding of community engagement and early warning communication

The training was funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) /Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) through the PASSAGE Project.

Item 4: Sub-Regional Climate Outlook Forum (Sub-COF5) for IGAD Cluster II

February 10-12, 2026 (MOYALE, Ethiopia) Sub-COF5 was organized by ICPAC and ICPALD, in collaboration with Norwegian Capacity (NORCAP), National Meteorological and Hydrological Services of Ethiopia & Kenya, and WMO Global Producing Centres. This forum was supported with funding from the UK Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and Germany.

The Cluster II Marsabit–Borana cross-border sub-COF5 focused on strengthening the uptake of weather and climate information for early warning and drought response. Communities, scientists, media, meteorological agencies from Ethiopia & Kenya, and cross-border stakeholders came together to translate the March–May 2026 (MAM) forecast into sector specific advisories.

In the spirit of strengthening the entire climate information value chain, from regional centers to the 'last mile' user, "sizeable climate information is needed for utilization by pastoralists in

making decisions for the next season" said Dr. Guyo Roba, ICPALD Head of Drylands Development, speaking at the opening session on behalf of Dr. Dereje Wakjira, the Director.

The session also shared on the ongoing climate service strengthening efforts within the cluster, including progress on co-production, dissemination of risk narratives and lessons from related regional initiatives. At the livestock sector group discussion advisories were developed based on the MAM forecast.



Prior to this, a comprehensive review of the OND 2025 rainfall season provided context for the forward planning. Indigenous Knowledge forecasts were presented alongside scientific analyses, inspiring dialogue on the integration of local and scientific knowledge systems. Sector presentations examined impacts of the previous season on agriculture, livestock and pastoralism, water resources, climate-induced migration and displacement, disaster risk management and health.



Item 5: GHACOF72



ICPAC, in collaboration with IGAD Member States and partners, hosted the 72nd Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum (GHACOF 72) on 26–27 January 2026 in Nairobi, Kenya. The forum focused on the theme “Advancing Climate Services for Resilient Communities and Sustainable Development in the Greater Horn of Africa.”

The hybrid event brought together climate scientists, key sector users, government institutions, development partners, media, and civil society. It featured the regional climate outlook for the March–May 2026 season, discussions on sector implications, and the release of the GHACOF 72 statement.

Pre-events included the Climate Prediction Development Workshop (19–23 January 2026) and virtual co-production workshops (20–21 January 2026).

Link: [Seasonal Forecast Summary for Decision Makers](#)