



Technical Release



More than 1.1 million people in Somalia face acute food security crisis

Poor April-June rains coupled with poor October-December rainfall prospects lead to a worsening of food insecurity

September 20, 2016, Nairobi/Washington – Poor *Gu* (April to June) rainfall, locally significant floods, trade disruption, and new and continued population displacement contributed to a worsening of the food security situation in Somalia compared to six months ago. Acute malnutrition has also worsened over the same time period and remains high in many parts of the country. Although the latest forecast does not indicate a likely development of a La Niña event, forecast negative sea surface temperatures and a continued negative Indian Ocean Dipole are expected to drive below-average *Deyr* (October to December) rainfall. This is likely to lead to poor *Deyr* production and below-average pasture conditions, both of which will negatively impact food security.

Approximately 1 096 000 people face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and 43 000 more people will be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4)¹ across Somalia through December 2016 according to the latest findings from a countrywide seasonal assessment. Additionally, 3.9 million people are classified as Stressed (IPC Phase 2) through the end of the year, bringing the total number of people facing acute food insecurity across Somalia to five million. Compared to six months ago, these figures represent an increase of approximately 20 percent in the number of people in IPC Phases 3 and 4 and a five percent increase in the number of people in IPC Phase 2 since. This seasonal assessment was jointly led by the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit for Somalia (FSNAU, a project managed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations), and the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET, a project funded by USAID) and carried out with the active participation of Government institutions and other partners.

Acute malnutrition has worsened and remains high in many parts of Somalia. Results from 28 separate nutrition surveys conducted between June and July 2016 by FSNAU and partners among rural and internally displaced populations across Somalia indicate that an estimated 193 200 children under the age of five are acutely malnourished, including 36 900 who are severely malnourished and face increased risk of morbidity and death. Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) prevalence is above the Critical threshold (15%) in 14 out of 28 rural and displaced population groups surveyed. Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) is Critical (4.0-5.6%) in 7 out of 28 rural and displaced population groups surveyed. Estimates for all of Somalia based on extrapolation to areas not covered by the 28 surveys indicate that the overall number of acutely malnourished is likely to remain substantially high, with over 300 000 children under the age of five acutely malnourished, including more than 50 000 children likely to be severely malnourished. Results from the 28 surveys also show high levels of malnutrition among women of child bearing age (15-49 years old).

The 2016 *Gu* rains were poor, started late and ended early in most regions; rainfall was better in parts of the previously drought affected northwest. In southern part of Somalia, which is the major crop producing part of the country, the 2016 *Gu* cereal production is estimated at 65 000 tonnes. This is 49 percent below long-term average (1995-2015) and 20 percent below the five-year average for 2011-2015. Furthermore, flooding has affected riverine livelihoods and adjacent urban areas in parts of southern and central Somalia (Hiran, Juba and Jowhar District of Middle Shabelle) during the 2016 *Gu* season, which contributed to the deterioration of food security in these areas. However, in the northwest parts of the country, the anticipated 2016 *Gu/Karan* cereal production is estimated at 43 850 tonnes which is 96 percent higher than the five-year average for 2011-2015 due to above average *Gu/Karan* rains and increased agricultural input support. This is expected to ease the food insecurity situation in the area.

Guban pastoral livelihood zone of Awdal Region in the northwest remains in acute food security Crisis (IPC Phase 3) due to lingering impacts of previous droughts coupled with faster than usual depletion of pasture and water. Northern Inland pastoral livelihood zone in Bari and Nugaal Regions and southern sgropastoral livelihood zone of Hiran and Lower Shabelle Regions, and parts of Juba also face acute food security Crisis (IPC Phase 3) due to consecutive seasons of poor rainfall. The cow pea belt agropastoral livelihood zone in central Somalia (Mudug and Galgadud Regions) has been classified as Crisis (IPC Phase 3) due to the near complete crop failure and poor livestock performance during the 2016 *Gu* season.

Some urban areas in southern Somalia continue to experience trade disruption due to insurgent activities. As a result, Huduur and Wajid in Bakool Region and Bulu Burto in Hiran Region remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

Across Somalia, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) remain extremely vulnerable and represent a major proportion (58%) of the total number of people who face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and Emergency (IPC Phase 4) between now and December 2016. Data for Somalia obtained from UNHCR shows an increasing trend in population displacement since mid-2015 through July 2016.

¹The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a set of tools and procedures to classify the severity of food insecurity using a widely accepted five-phase scale. At the area level, it divides areas into the following phases: IPC Phase 1=Minimal; Phase 2=Stressed; Phase 3=Crisis; Phase 4=Emergency; and Phase 5=Famine.

Below to near average rainfall is expected to prevail in most parts of Somalia during the forthcoming 2016 *Deyr* (October-December) season due to forecasted negative sea surface temperatures and negative Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD), with continued adverse impact on *Deyr* season crop production and livestock production and reproduction during the *Deyr* season. This is expected to further exacerbate the adverse food security impacts of the poor 2016 *Gu* rainfall in many parts of the country.

Acutely malnourished children and women need to be enrolled in acute malnutrition management programmes and require urgent nutrition and health support. In areas where Critical levels of acute malnutrition persist, identifying and addressing the underlying causes deserve attention and concerted effort.

Life-saving humanitarian assistance is needed to support more than 1.1 million people who face acute food security Crisis and Emergency (IPC Phases 3 & 4). Livelihood support is needed for nearly 3.9 million people who have been classified as Stressed (IPC Phase 2) in order to protect their livelihoods and increase their resilience against shocks. Some population groups suffer from both acute food insecurity and acute malnutrition and require a special consideration.

Areas and Populations of Concern

Populations groups classified as Crisis and Emergency are priorities for interventions aimed at addressing acute food insecurity.

| Region of Somalia | Somalia 2014 Total Population | # of Acutely Food Insecure People (August-December 2016) | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--|------------------|-------------------|
| | | Stressed (IPC 2) | Crisis (IPC 3) | Emergency (IPC 4) |
| Awdal | 673 264 | 137 000 | 70 000 | 12000 |
| Woqooyi Galbeed | 1 242 003 | 110 000 | 68 000 | 11000 |
| Togdheer | 721 363 | 342 000 | 25 000 | 1000 |
| Sanaag | 544 123 | 109 000 | 49 000 | 0 |
| Sool | 327 427 | 128 000 | 12 000 | 0 |
| Bari | 730 147 | 365 000 | 60 000 | 0 |
| Nugaal | 392 698 | 125 000 | 31000 | 0 |
| Mudug | 717862 | 201000 | 47000 | 0 |
| Galgaduud | 569 434 | 178 000 | 49000 | 0 |
| Hiran | 520 686 | 113 000 | 96000 | 0 |
| Middle Shabelle | 516 035 | 163 000 | 5000 | 0 |
| Lower Shabelle | 1 202 219 | 409 000 | 41000 | 0 |
| Bakool | 367 227 | 94 000 | 51000 | 0 |
| Bay | 792 182 | 164 000 | 60000 | 1 000 |
| Gedo | 508 403 | 154 000 | 9000 | 2000 |
| Middle Juba | 362 921 | 112 000 | 25000 | 0 |
| Lower Juba | 489 307 | 124 000 | 43000 | 1000 |
| Banadir | 1 650 228 | 833 000 | 355000 | 15 000 |
| Grand Total | 12 327 529 | 3 861 000 | 1 096 000 | 43 000 |

A nutrition situation is considered Critical when Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) prevalence is 15 percent or higher. Accordingly, the following population groups have Critical rates of acute malnutrition and are considered hotspots in need of urgent nutrition and health support interventions: Guban pastoral and Berbera IDPs (Awdal and W. Galbeed Regions), Bosaaso IDPs (Bari Region), Garowe IDPs, Galkayo IDPs and Hawd pastoral livelihood zone of northeast and central Somalia along the Ethiopian border (Nugaal, Mudug and Galgadud Regions), Beletweyne Riverine (Hiran Region), Bay agro-pastoral and Baidoa IDPs (Bay Region), Bakool pastoral (Bakool Region), North Gedo pastoral, North Gedo Riverine and Dolow IDPs (Gedo Region), and Dhobley IDPs (Lower Juba Region).

The GAM prevalence among Mogadishu IDPs (14.7%) and Kismayo IDPs (14.5%) are close to the 15 percent Critical GAM threshold and these settlements also deserve attention. Critical to Very Critical maternal malnutrition (Mid-Upper Arm Circumference-MUAC less than 23 centimeters in 23.4 percent or more of women of child bearing age, (15-49 years of age) was observed among Dhusamareb IDPs, Guban pastoral, Bay agropastoral, and North Gedo Riverine livelihoods and these also deserve urgent attention.

For more information, please contact:

Chi Lael, Communications Officer,
Tel: +254 -739469107,
Email: chi.lael@fao.org

Joe Lamport, Strategic Communications Advisor
Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET)
Tel: +1 202-524-7749, Email: jlamport@few.net

