

## Large scale, multi-sectoral assistance will likely avert Famine (IPC Phase 5), but 6.5 million people in Somalia still face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse acute food insecurity outcomes

*1.8 million children are likely to be acutely malnourished; Risk of Famine persists in some areas*

**28 February 2022, Mogadishu** – Large-scale humanitarian assistance and 2022 Deyr rainfall that performed relatively better than the past two seasons will likely avert Famine (IPC Phase 5) in Somalia during the January to June 2023 period. However, drought conditions persist, and 6.5 million people across Somalia are expected to face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse acute food insecurity outcomes between April and June 2023 amid an anticipated significant scale-down of humanitarian assistance, a likely sixth season of below-average rainfall in the April to June 2023 Gu season, high food prices, and, in many areas, ongoing conflict/insecurity, on top of the lasting impacts of five consecutive seasons of below-average to poor rainfall. Among the food-insecure population, up to 223,000 people are expected to be in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in the most severely drought- and conflict-affected areas across Somalia through mid-2023. Moreover, high levels of acute malnutrition persist in most parts of the country, driven by chronic health and WASH factors and exacerbated by reduced food and milk intake and disease outbreaks. Based on the results of 31 nutrition surveys conducted by the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) and partners between October and December 2022, the total estimated acute malnutrition burden for Somalia from January to December 2023 is approximately 1.8 million children, including 477,700 children who are likely to be severely malnourished.

While Famine (IPC Phase 5) is no longer assessed to be the most likely scenario in April-June 2023, there remains a risk of such extreme acute food insecurity outcome. The 63rd Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum (GHACOF63) [forecast for the March to May 2023 season](#) points to below-average rainfall, high temperatures, and drier-than-normal conditions in parts of Somalia. However, the waning of La Niña climate conditions is anticipated to result in less severe rainfall deficits than earlier in the drought. Relatively higher rainfall is expected to support some improvement in cropping and livestock conditions, but it will take multiple seasons of good rainfall for full recovery. Finally, while multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance is now expected to continue at significant levels, levels of food assistance will likely decline from April to June based on current, inadequate funding levels. While these assumptions underpin the most likely scenario, there is a reasonable chance that these assumptions do not materialize as anticipated. Hence, three population groups in southern Somalia face a Risk of Famine between April and June 2023 if (1) the April to June 2023 Gu season rainfall turns out to be much poorer than currently forecast, leading to crop production failure and (2) humanitarian assistance does not reach the most vulnerable populations in these areas. The areas and population groups that face a Risk of Famine are agropastoral populations in Burhakaba district of Bay region and settlements for Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in Baidoa (Bay) and Mogadishu (Banadir).

The provision of humanitarian food and non-food assistance (including nutrition, WASH, and health-related interventions) has been scaled up since July 2022. Funding for assistance is currently sufficient to continue reaching over 6.2 million people per month, on average, with emergency humanitarian food assistance through March 2023. Humanitarian assistance under the Nutrition Cluster has also been scaled up, with: (1) 120% and 94% of the targets for 2022 met for the treatment of severely and moderately malnourished children, respectively; (2) 2.31 million children vaccinated against measles and Vitamin A and deworming tablets administered to two million children in November 2022; and (3) a campaign underway to vaccinate nearly 1 million children against cholera. This is expected to mitigate the size of the acutely food insecure population and prevent the worsening of food security and nutrition outcomes in many areas. However, given the protracted severity of the three-year drought, levels of acute food insecurity across Somalia remain very high. Between January and March 2023, nearly 5 million people are still experiencing Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or higher) outcomes, including close to 1.4 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and 96,000 people estimated to be in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5), meaning they are not receiving sufficient food assistance to prevent food consumption gaps. Additionally, despite ongoing coordinated efforts, current funding levels are not adequate to sustain current food assistance levels beyond March 2023, with only 2.7 million people, on average, expected to receive food assistance between April and June. As a result, acute food insecurity and malnutrition levels are expected to increase between April and June 2023, with 6.5 million people expected to face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse outcomes. This includes approximately 1.9 million people that will likely be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and nearly 223,000 people that will likely be in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5).

Urgent, coordinated, and timely funding to support the continuation of high levels of integrated humanitarian assistance (in-kind food, cash/voucher transfers, nutrition, WASH, and health-related) is required through at least June 2023, and likely through late 2023, to prevent extreme and deteriorating food insecurity and nutrition outcomes and excess mortality.

The conclusions above are based on the 2022 Post-Deyr IPC Acute Food Insecurity and Famine Risk Analyses conducted in January 2022 by 221 technical experts, representing 86 institutions (government, UN, NGO, and IPC GSU). The IPC Global Support Unit (IPC-GSU) provided technical support throughout the analysis process.

The cumulative impacts of the five-season drought have led to loss of life and severe damage to livelihoods. Consecutive poor-to-failed harvests among farmers and declining livestock holdings among pastoralists are contributing to worsening food security and nutrition outcomes due to losses of main food and income sources. In addition to poor rainfall and persistent drought, other drivers of acute food insecurity and malnutrition in Somalia include high food prices, conflict/insecurity, and disease outbreaks. As a result of these compounding shocks, many rural households have experienced erosion of their livelihoods and coping capacities, and face widening food consumption gaps. Social support systems remain overstretched. These factors have driven a surge in population displacement from rural areas to IDP settlements.

Region	Population (Estimates for 2023)	Number of Acutely Food Insecure People (Rural, IDP and Urban Combined)					
		Current (January-March 2023)			Projection (April-June 2023)		
		Crisis (IPC 3)	Emergency (IPC 4)	Catastrophe (IPC 5)	Crisis (IPC 3)	Emergency (IPC 4)	Catastrophe (IPC 5)
Awdal	576,543	83,960	27,560	-	119,020	44,750	-
W. Galbeed	1,311,946	229,080	74,660	-	340,040	130,090	-
Togdheer	780,092	182,290	67,330	-	261,630	96,100	2,050
Sool	497,571	155,290	58,470	-	191,490	81,090	-
Sanaag	388,559	101,720	30,560	-	123,140	41,290	-
Bari	1,116,850	290,950	96,970	-	368,960	111,480	-
Nugaal	572,647	122,170	33,410	-	152,230	44,160	-
Mudug	1,332,633	339,040	119,640	-	395,760	150,160	8,760
Galgaduud	736,546	216,720	76,410	-	255,390	104,230	1,190
Hiraan	457,546	91,660	23,740	-	128,580	63,940	-
M. Shabelle	918,463	192,920	69,130	-	260,770	105,600	12,160
L. Shabelle	1,477,523	125,330	9,210	-	159,340	55,160	-
Bakool	492,495	104,890	33,320	2,240	138,740	62,810	4,460
Bay	1,131,121	410,430	289,550	35,040	399,980	379,230	76,360
Gedo	884,235	154,740	38,050	-	205,780	60,850	-
M. Juba	356,269	38,460	-	-	51,690	3,710	-
L. Juba	1,049,796	115,970	17,690	-	173,530	31,160	-
Banadir	2,874,431	573,140	294,330	58,870	699,510	294,330	117,730
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16,955,266</b>	<b>3,528,760</b>	<b>1,360,030</b>	<b>96,150</b>	<b>4,425,580</b>	<b>1,860,140</b>	<b>222,710</b>
<b>Total in Crisis or Worse (IPC Phases 3, 4 and 5)</b>				<b>4,984,940</b>	<b>6,508,430</b>		

The October to December 2022 Deyr season rainfall was 25 to 55 percent below average in most parts of central and southern Somalia. In parts of northern Somalia where rainfall amounts were average to above average, distribution over time and space was erratic. The below-average rains led to below-average Deyr crop production in southern and northwestern Somalia. Although the Deyr rains partially replenished rangeland resources, some pastoral areas will continue to experience pasture and water shortages before the onset of Gu season rainfall in April 2023.

The 2022 Deyr season cereal harvest in southern Somalia is estimated at 67,200 tons, which is 32 percent below the 1995-2021 average, mainly due to a combination of below-average rainfall, long dry spells, fluctuations in river levels to support irrigation in riverine areas, high cost of farm inputs, and insecurity, all of which hampered crop cultivation. In the Northwest, the 2022 Gu/Karan cereal production is estimated at 9,400 tons, which is 75 percent below the 2010-2021 average, as a result of poorly distributed rainfall and prolonged dry spells, high costs of farm inputs, and additional impacts of pests and bird infestations.

Based on the below-average to poor 2022 Deyr cereal harvests in agropastoral and riverine livelihood zones, as well as the likelihood of below-average April to June 2023 Gu season rainfall, food and income from crop production and agricultural employment, as well as livestock production, will be limited for poor households through June. Therefore, most agropastoral and riverine livelihoods across Somalia are classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or Emergency (IPC Phase 4) between April and June 2023, with most poor households expected to have moderate to large food consumption gaps through at least June 2023.

In pastoral areas, poor pastoralists have already experienced a significant decline in the number of salable animals due to the impacts of extended drought. Pastoral households have also accumulated debt burdens, driven by the high cost of water and feed for livestock and increased reliance on credit for food purchases. As a result, poor pastoral households are expected to face moderate to large food consumption gaps through June 2023, based on few livestock births, reduced income from livestock sales, and low availability of milk for both adults and children. Accordingly, most pastoral livelihoods across northern and central Somalia are classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) between April and June 2023. In southern Somalia where average rainfall amounts and herd sizes among poor households are higher, most pastoral livelihoods are classified as Stressed (IPC Phase 2) or Minimal (IP Phase 1) over the same period.

A majority of the estimated 3.7 million IDPs across Somalia are poor and have limited livelihood assets, few income-earning opportunities in the context of high food prices, low access to communal support, and high reliance on external humanitarian assistance. New IDPs arrive in desperate conditions and may face challenges accessing humanitarian assistance upon their arrival, especially among marginalized and minority groups. As a result of access challenges and insufficient donor funding to sustain humanitarian food assistance at sufficient levels from April to June, a significant proportion of IDPs are expected to face moderate to large food consumption gaps and are classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or Emergency (IPC Phase 4) through June 2023.

The urban poor across Somalia – who already spend a disproportionately large share of their income (60-80 percent) on food – continue to face difficulty purchasing sufficient food in the context of significantly elevated food prices. Many urban areas are classified in Stressed (IPC Phase 2). However, in Lasaanood district of Sool region, recently escalated conflict has claimed many lives, displaced tens of thousands of people, and disrupted livelihoods. As such, affected urban and displaced populations are projected to face Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes between April and June 2023.

Recent nutrition surveys conducted in late 2022 continue to point to high levels of acute malnutrition in many areas. The main drivers of acute malnutrition and mortality are household-level reductions in food and milk consumption, disease outbreaks (including acute watery diarrhea (AWD), cholera, and measles) and associated high levels of morbidity among children, limited health and nutrition services, and persistent underlying causes related to sanitation and health. Though assessment results generally show low levels of mortality (Crude Death Rate (CDR) and/or Under-Five Death Rate (U5DR)) in most surveyed areas of Somalia, very high mortality rates

were recorded in October among agropastoral populations in Baidoa and Burhakaba districts, agropastoral populations in Middle Shabelle, and displaced populations in Baidoa and Mogadishu. Elevated levels of hunger and acute malnutrition that have now been sustained for a prolonged period have resulted, and will continue to result in, excess cumulative deaths.

Using the results from 31 nutrition surveys conducted between October and December 2022, the IPC acute malnutrition (AMN) analysis conducted in January 2023 projected

Region	Under-Five Population <sup>1</sup> (2023 Estimates)	Total Acute Malnutrition Burden <sup>2</sup> (January -December 2023)		
		Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM)	Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM)	Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM)
Awdal	115,309	6,160	26,120	32,280
W. Galbeed	262,389	16,320	55,780	72,100
Togdheer	156,018	10,970	37,240	48,210
Sool	99,514	7,220	32,770	39,990
Sanaag	77,712	5,700	28,380	34,080
Bari	223,370	19,730	95,410	115,140
Nugaal	114,529	11,990	47,420	59,410
Mudug	266,527	31,490	113,660	145,150
Galgaduud	147,309	17,490	55,210	72,700
Hiraan	91,509	12,720	41,640	54,360
M. Shabelle	183,693	29,760	70,760	100,520
L. Shabelle	295,505	53,170	118,120	171,290
Bakool	98,499	23,020	39,630	62,650
Bay	226,224	81,620	101,730	183,350
Gedo	176,847	13,710	57,890	71,600
M. Juba	71,254	9,510	25,410	34,920
L. Juba	209,959	30,180	73,130	103,310
Banadir	574,886	96,920	258,770	355,690
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,391,053</b>	<b>477,680</b>	<b>1,279,070</b>	<b>1,756,750</b>

that most population groups across Somalia would face Critical (IPC AMN Phase 4) or Serious (IPC AMN Phase 3) levels of acute malnutrition through June 2023. The total burden of acute malnutrition among children under the age of five years in Somalia in 2023 is estimated at approximately 1.8 million acutely malnourished children, including 477,700 who are projected to be severely malnourished.

In order to prevent extreme acute food insecurity and malnutrition outcomes and worsening humanitarian conditions in Somalia, urgent action is required to sustain a multi-faceted and scaled up humanitarian response that includes food security, nutrition, health, and WASH interventions. Priorities should include ensuring timely and adequate assistance to newly displaced populations and minority vulnerable groups. Improved humanitarian access and coverage in areas affected by insecurity and conflict is also essential to reach populations in greatest need.

#### Why is Famine (IPC Phase 5) no longer projected?

Famine (IPC Phase 5) has been averted thus far and is not expected to be the most likely outcome through June 2023. Several factors have led to the downward revision in projected outcomes from Famine (IPC Phase 5) to Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and Emergency (IPC Phase 4) in agropastoral areas of Baidoa and Burhakaba districts and Baidoa and Mogadishu IDP sites, including the following:

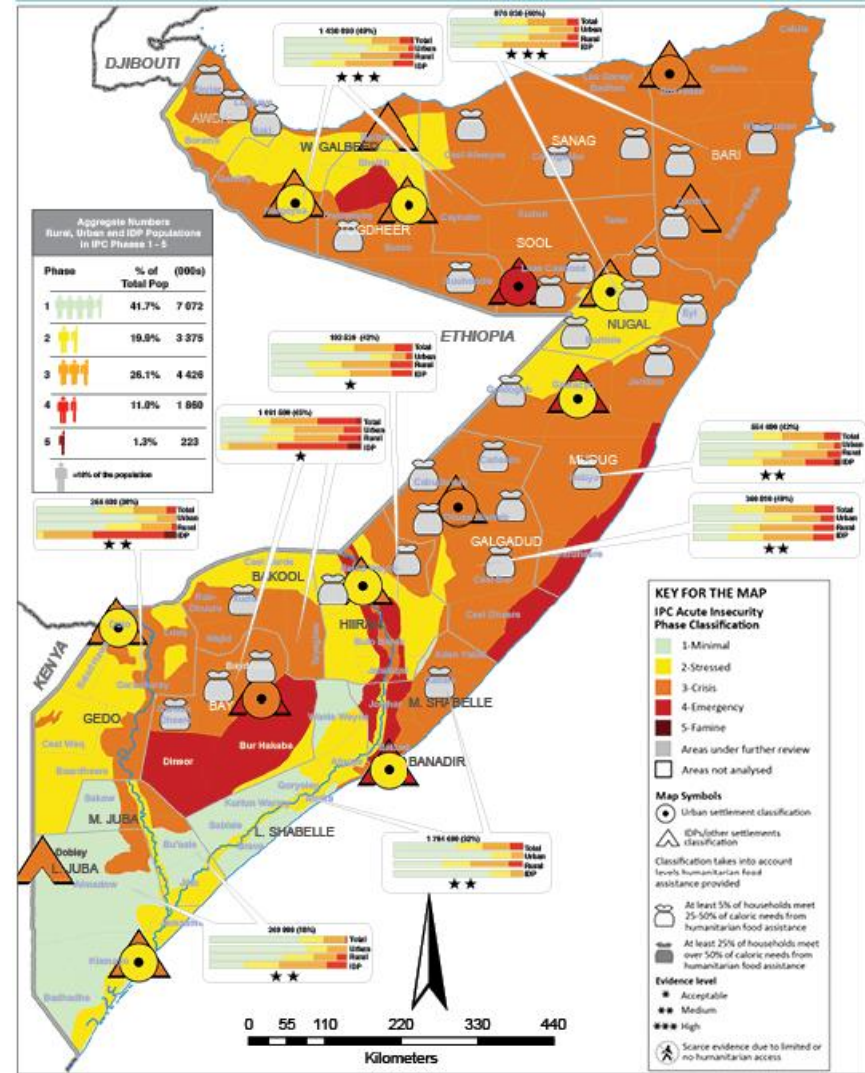
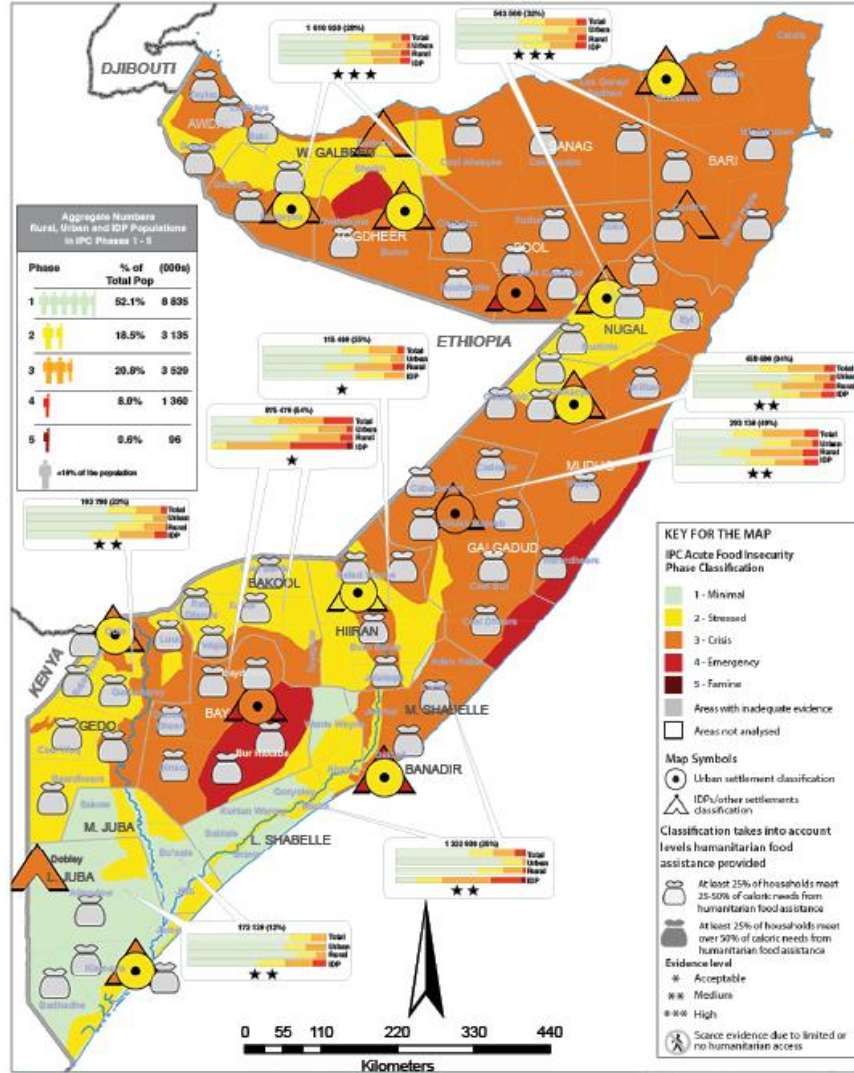
- While rainfall was below average, performance in the 2022 Deyr was better than the failed 2022 Gu and 2021 Deyr seasons. In Baidoa, the accumulation of rainfall was at least 150 mm, much of which was received during the critical crop growing stages. Rainfall in Burhakaba performed more poorly. River water levels also trended near normal at key points in the season, supporting improved access to water and improved cultivation in most of the riverine livelihoods along the Shabelle and Juba rivers. In pastoral areas, total rainfall accumulation was near to above normal in much of the north, and deficits were not as severe as forecast in the south, permitting the alleviation of water, pasture, and browse shortages in most areas compared to the prior April to June Gu wet season and July to September Hagaa dry season.
- Overall crop production in southern Somalia in the 2022 deyr was significantly better than the past three seasons, supported by the relatively better rains and, most likely, the sustained, high levels of cash assistance. This was most evident in Baidoa and Qansaxdheere districts, whereas crop production performed more poorly compared to normal in Burhakaba and Diinsoor. Based on field assessment observations and key informant interviews, many IDPs split their households and sent able-bodied members back to plant or labor on farms. The high levels of cash assistance is understood to have supported access to seeds and inputs and/or permitted households to pay down some debt in order to purchase more of these inputs.
- Typically, average total rainfall is higher in southern Somalia compared to the north. During the 2022 Deyr, the large rainfall totals in the south, while below average, and near to above-normal rainfall totals in the north supported the recovery of livestock body conditions. The rains also supported livestock conceptions that will result in births in the upcoming Gu season, especially among small ruminants in southern pastoral areas. Nevertheless, it will take several seasons for many pastoral households in northern and central Somalia to recover from the large loss of salable livestock and accumulation of debts.
- Sorghum and maize prices in southern Somalia – particularly in Baidoa and Mogadishu, but also Qoryoley, Beletweyn, Kismayo, and other reference markets – have significantly declined from the record highs reached in mid-2022, driven by both improvements in local production and the high levels of cash assistance that has supported market functioning. In Baidoa, the price of a kg of sorghum has dropped to by third of what it was in July 2022, from 19,500 SOS to 13,120 SOS in January 2023; this is still around 65 percent above the five-year average but exemplifies that the upward trend in prices has waned.
- Humanitarian food and non-food assistance (including nutrition, WASH, and health-related interventions) has been scaled up since July 2022. Funding for assistance is currently sufficient to continue reaching over 6.2 million people per month, on average, with emergency humanitarian food assistance through March 2023.
- The high levels of child and adult mortality reported in Bay and Banadir/Mogadishu regions in previous surveys were associated with AWD/cholera and measles. A nation-wide integrated campaign in November 2022 vaccinated 2.31 million children against measles, and administered Vitamin A and deworming tablets to about two million children. A house-to-house cholera vaccination campaign that started in late January 2023 aims to vaccinate approximately one million children aged one year and above including pregnant women in the 10 districts most effected by drought in Mogadishu/Banadir (Daynile, Dharkenley, Hamar Jajab, Hodan and Khahda), Bay (Baidoa), Lower Juba (Kismayo), Lower Shabelle (Afgoye and Marka) and Middle Shabelle (Jowhar).

<sup>1</sup> Based on a total 2023 population estimate of 16,955,266; and population of children under the age of five is estimated to be approximated as 20% of the total population.

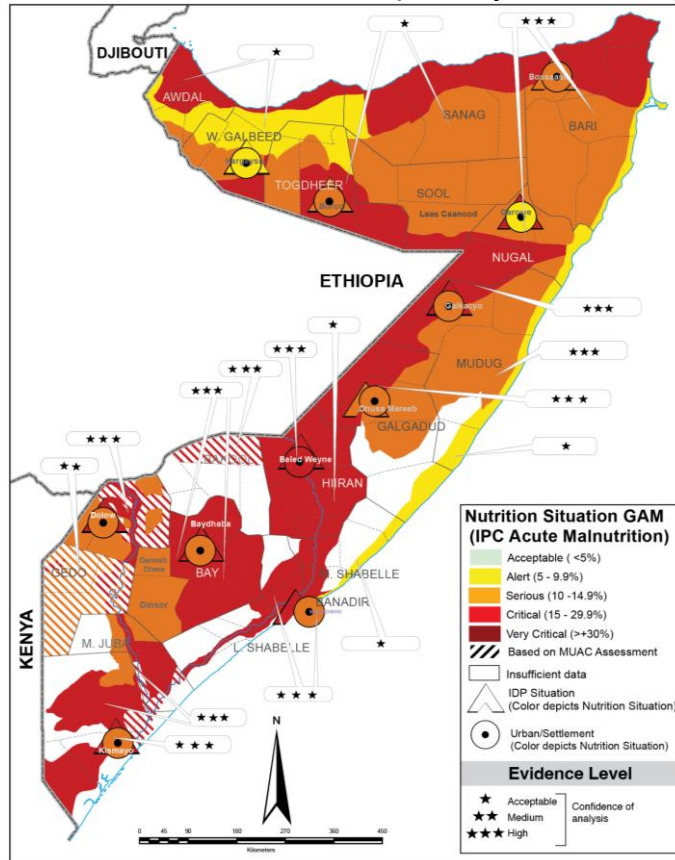
<sup>2</sup> Incidence Correction Factor (ICF) used for burden estimations are 3.6 for SAM and for 2.6 for MAM.

### Current Food Security Outcomes (January-March 2023)

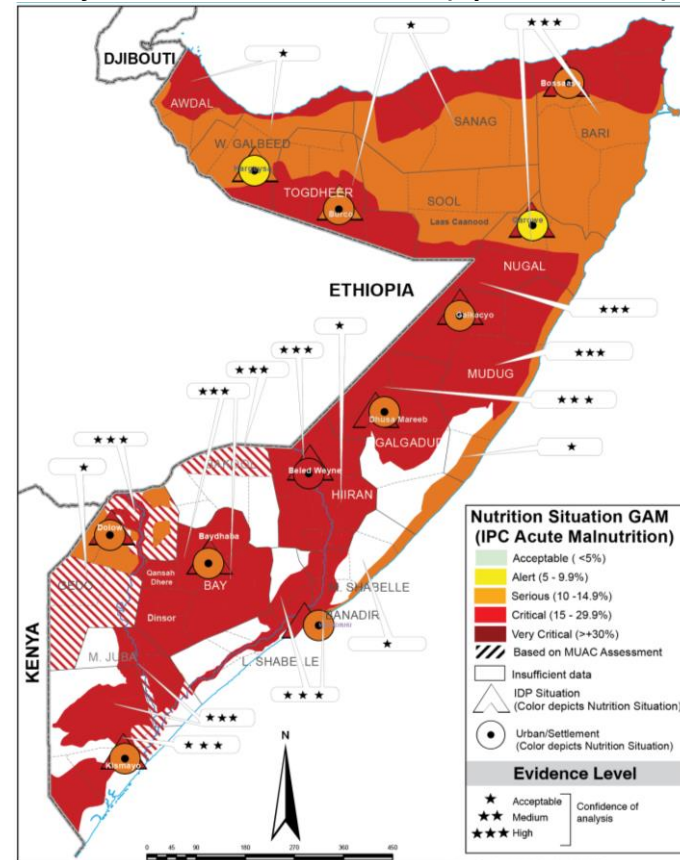
### Projected Food Security Outcomes (April-June 2023)



### Current Nutrition Outcomes (January-March 2023)



### Projected Nutrition Outcomes (April-June 2023)



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## Annex: Somalia Risk of Famine, April-June 2023

In the most likely scenario, approximately 223,000 people are expected to be in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) between April and June 2023. While Famine (IPC Phase 5) is no longer considered the most likely scenario, three areas still face a Risk of Famine between April and June 2023, meaning that Famine (IPC Phase 5) could occur (has a reasonable chance of happening) if (1) the 2023 Gu season rainfall performs more poorly than currently predicted, leading to severe or failed crop production and (2) humanitarian assistance does not reach the most vulnerable populations in these areas. The areas and population groups facing a Risk of Famine are agropastoral populations in Burhakaba district and IDP settlements in Baidoa (Bay) and Mogadishu (Banadir). The Risk of Famine in these areas is predicated on two key conditions<sup>3</sup>:

Risk of Famine refers to the reasonable probability of an area facing Famine in the projection period. While this is not considered the most likely scenario, it is a scenario where Famine has a realistic chance of occurring, should conditions evolve in a manner worse than anticipated. It complements the Famine and Famine Likely projections of the most likely scenario by providing insight into the potential for Famine. For additional information, see the [IPC Famine Fact Sheet](#).

(i) April to June 2023 Gu season rainfall and crop production fails. Under this scenario, local crop production failure would significantly diminish seasonal agricultural employment, which is a main income source among poor agropastoral and riverine households. Poor agropastoral households would face widening food consumption gaps as they lack alternative income sources. A return to extreme drought conditions may also lead to increasing disease incidence (measles, acute watery diarrhea-AWD, malaria, or other diseases) among children under five years of age, though mitigated by recent vaccination campaigns, and could drive a rebound in levels of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) and excess mortality.

(ii) Planned humanitarian assistance (particularly in-kind food, cash/voucher transfers, nutrition, WASH, and health-related assistance) does not reach the most vulnerable populations, whether due to physical access constraints, logistical barriers, or the marginalization of certain groups.

While the above two conditions are considered the key drivers of the Risk of Famine scenario, there are additional factors that could result from or interact with these two conditions to lead to Famine (IPC Phase 5):

(iii) Although destitution and displacement in Somalia is already included in the most likely scenario, worsening drought during the 2023 Gu (April-June) season could lead to another influx of newly displaced people to already crowded IDP settlements and urban areas, where food and income sources and levels of food assistance remain limited. Overcrowded IDP settlements with poor water and sanitation conditions would likely exacerbate current outbreaks of measles, acute watery diarrhea (AWD), or other diseases, with rising cases mostly affecting children under five years of age. Under this scenario, the interaction of high levels of food insecurity and disease could drive a rapid increase in levels of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) to 30 percent or higher and, at worst, an increase in excess mortality.

(iv) Increased conflict and insecurity lead to further increases in population displacement, disruptions to market access and functionality, impede household access to livelihood opportunities, and restrict access to humanitarian assistance. Such an increase would lead to a heightened risk of potential exclusion of vulnerable groups, especially in central and southern Somalia where there is increased confrontation between government allied forces and insurgents.

It is imperative that follow-up integrated food security, nutrition, and mortality assessments are conducted in the three areas facing the Risk of Famine.

The following risk factors need to be closely monitored throughout the projection period:

- Food prices, water prices, livestock prices, wage rates, and terms of trade
- 2023 Gu season rainfall performance and impacts on crop production, pasture and water (surface and groundwater) availability, and livestock body conditions, births, deaths, and milk availability
- Insecurity and conflict
- Population displacement
- Admission of acutely malnourished children to treatment and feeding centers
- Disease outbreaks, including AWD/cholera and measles
- Coverage of and access to humanitarian food assistance, including food security, nutrition, WASH and health

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<sup>3</sup> Food prices are already exceptionally high in Somalia and this is part of the analysis in the most likely scenario. The Risk of Famine analysis is based on conditions that are not currently considered likely but have a reasonable chance of occurring in an alternative scenario.