

### Acute Food Insecurity Overview

The population classified in IPC Acute Food Insecurity (AFI) Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse) has nearly doubled between February–March 2026 to a staggering 6.5 million people since early 2025. This includes more than 2 million people in IPC AFI Phase 4 (Emergency). All affected populations urgently need assistance to save lives, reduce food deficits, and protect livelihoods.

This alarming deterioration is driven by worsening drought, rising food prices, and insecurity across central, southern, and parts of northern Somalia. The situation is compounded by declining humanitarian assistance. For example, only 17 percent of the population in need received humanitarian food security support in January 2026.

Populations in agro-pastoral and pastoral livelihood zones and internally displaced people (IDPs) are expected to be hardest hit as the January 2026 Deyr season harvest failed and the Shabelle River dries up, halting off-season crop production and causing major food shortages. Pastoral households face loss of food and income as livestock weaken, produce less milk, and die at higher rates. Conflict and displacement further restrict movement and access to markets and grazing areas. As a result, families will rely more on unsustainable coping strategies, such as selling their few remaining livestock.

Rainfall from April–June is likely to be near normal in most areas and above-normal in some northern areas. This will likely lead to only a modest improvement in overall food security, with 5.5 million people still expected to be in IPC AFI Phase 3 or above.

### Acute Malnutrition Overview

Acute malnutrition in Somalia remains of high concern, with deteriorating global acute malnutrition (GAM) over the last two years. From January–December 2026, an estimated 1.84 million children aged 6–59 months are expected to be acutely malnourished, including 483,000 cases of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) that require urgent treatment. This represents a 7 percent increase in GAM and a 4 percent increase in SAM compared to a similar season analysis in 2024. Between February and March 2026, 38 out of 48 analysed areas are classified in IPC Acute Malnutrition (AMN) Phase 3 or above, including 21 areas in IPC AMN Phase 4 (Critical), characterised by widespread wasting among children and death from preventable diseases. A further deterioration is expected between April and June 2026 when 45 out of 48 areas will be classified in IPC AMN Phases 3 and 4. This is mainly due to higher levels of disease during the rainy season, and less access to healthcare and nutrition treatment due to limited funding, putting children at a higher risk of mortality.

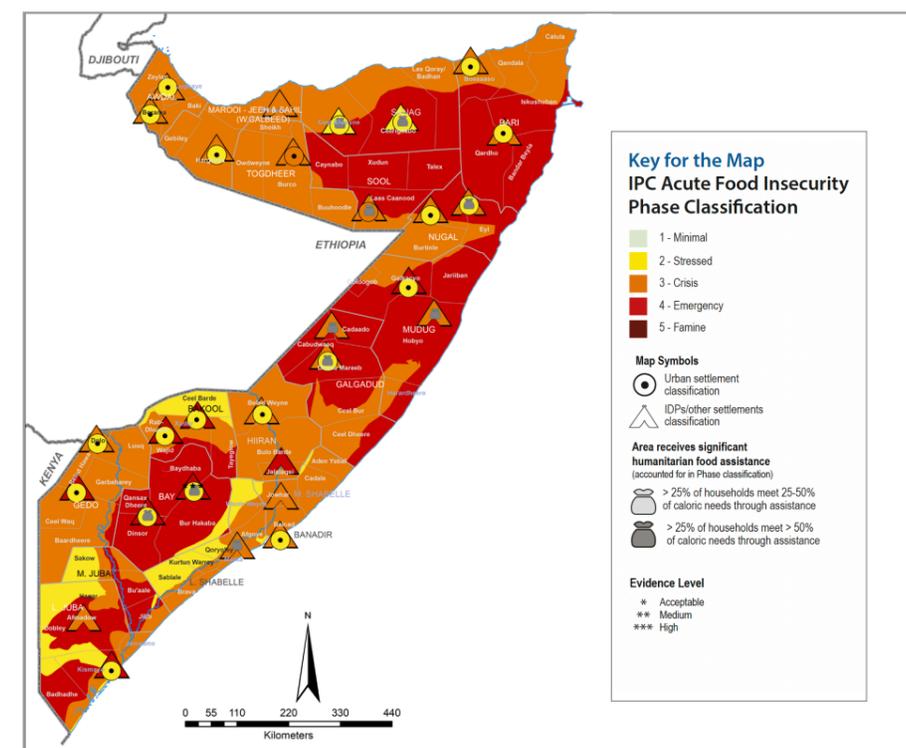
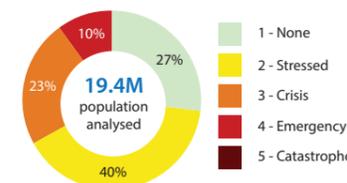
Prolonged drought is driving a severe rise in acute malnutrition as crop failures, livestock losses, low milk availability, and rising food prices reduce household food access and dietary diversity, resulting in inadequate child feeding. High levels of diseases are overwhelming already overstretched health and nutrition services. Limited funding has led to the closure of 125 SAM treatment sites, and 360 sites offering treatment for moderate acute malnutrition. This has contributed to lower immunisation rates, vitamin A supplementation and deworming coverage, increasing the risk of disease and malnutrition. Inadequate water and poor sanitation continue to be of concern especially during the Gu season when there is an increased risk of water contamination and disease from high rates of open defecation.

### First Projection Acute Food Insecurity | February - March 2026



An estimated 6.5 million people in Somalia are experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity—IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse)—between February and March 2026.

33% of the analysed population is experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) between February and March 2026.



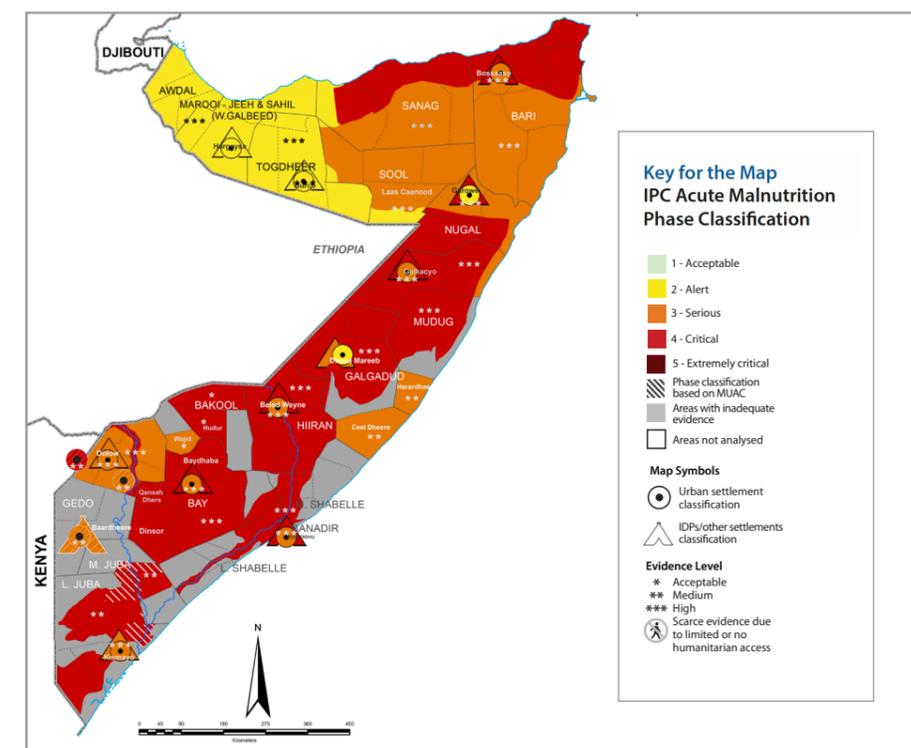
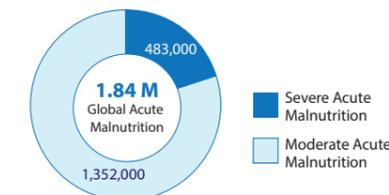
### Key Drivers | Acute Food Insecurity

- Poor rainfall**  
Below normal rainfall during the failed 2025 Deyr season (October–December) led to severe water shortages, poor crop and livestock production, and reduced food availability.
- Conflict and insecurity**  
Conflict and insecurity across Somalia are driving displacement and disrupting farming, markets, and access to food and aid.
- Displacement**  
Around 3.4 million people are already displaced in Somalia, and increasing drought and insecurity are likely to drive further displacement.
- High food prices**  
Even as global cereal prices fell in December 2025, local food prices stayed high, with sorghum and maize still over 20 percent above the five-year average.

### First Projection Acute Malnutrition | February - March 2026



About 1.84 million cases of children aged 6–59 months in Somalia will likely suffer from acute malnutrition between January and December 2026, including 483,000 children who are likely to be severely malnourished.



### Contributing Factors | Acute Malnutrition

- High childhood disease burden**  
Childhood illness is widespread across the country, and fever, cough and diarrhoea are the most commonly reported illnesses. Outbreaks of cholera, measles and diphtheria are adding an additional burden.
- Poor water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services**  
Access to safe drinking water and sanitation is inadequate, particularly in rural areas, driving acute watery diarrhoea and recurrent cholera outbreaks.
- Suboptimal infant and young child caring and feeding practices**  
Childcare and feeding practices are persistently below recommended standards in adequacy and quality, further increasing the risk of acute malnutrition.
- Limited access to services**  
Funding cuts have severely reduced access to lifesaving treatment for acute malnutrition and disease. Low immunisation coverage, limited vitamin A supplementation and deworming, along with the closure of treatment sites and mobile clinics—have sharply increased disease risks and acute malnutrition, particularly in rural areas.

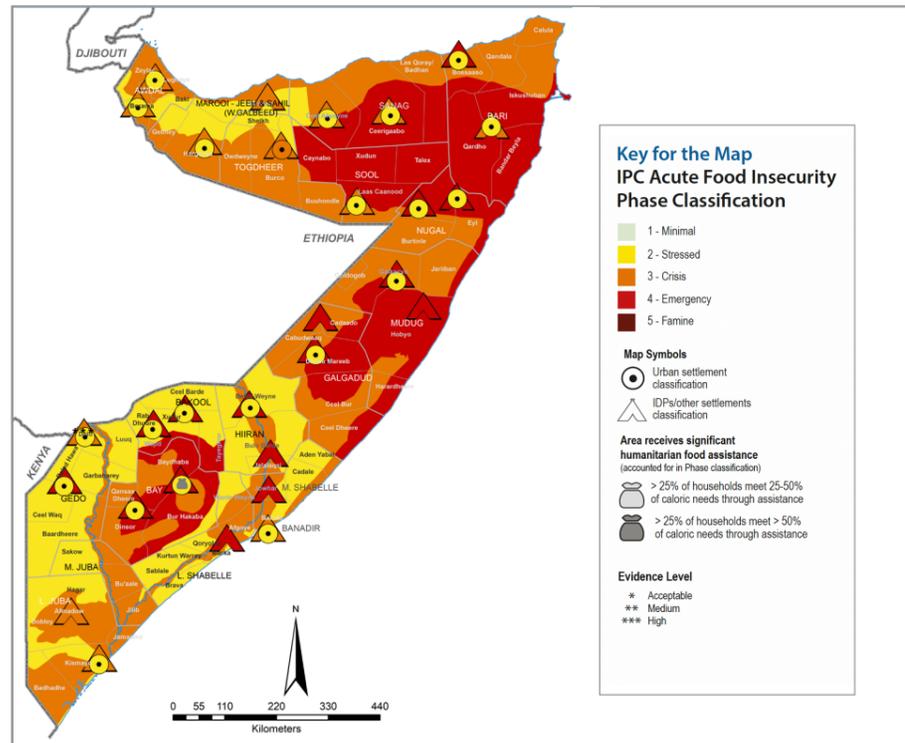
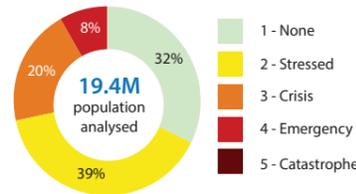


Second Projection Acute Food Insecurity | April - June 2026

5.5M

An estimated 5.5 million people in Somalia will likely experience high levels of acute food insecurity—IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse)—between April and June 2026.

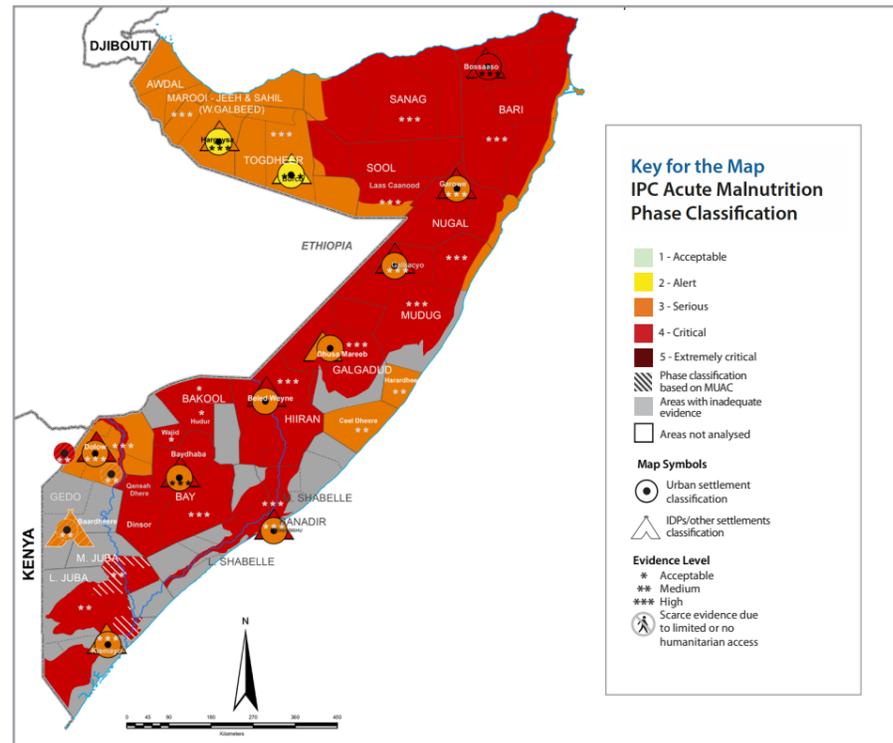
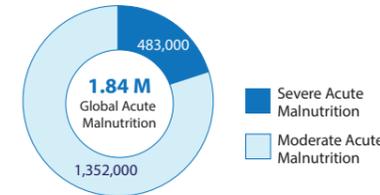
28% of the analysed population are likely to face high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above) between April and June 2026.



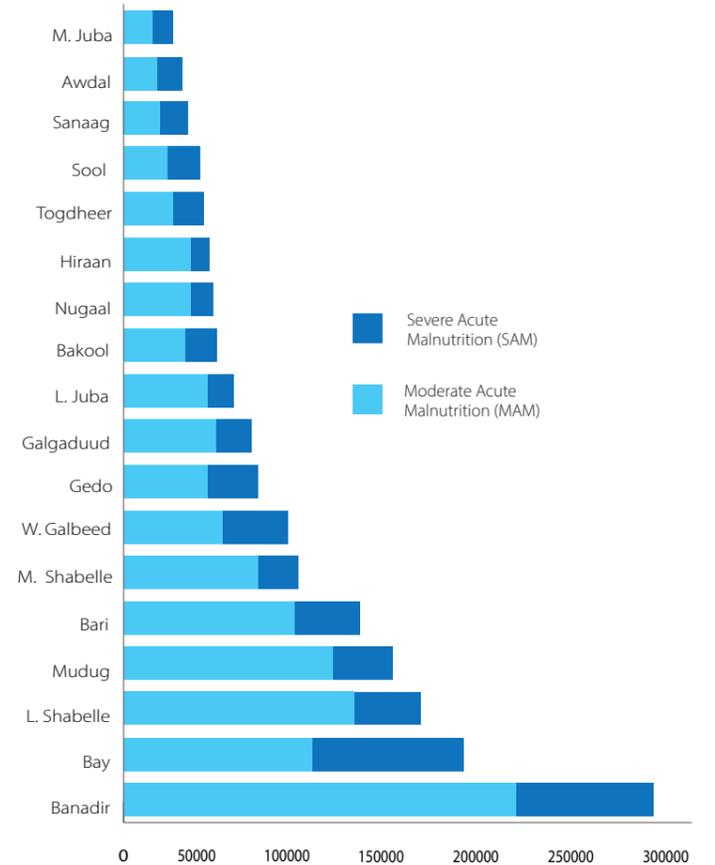
Second Projection Acute Malnutrition | April - June 2026

1.84M

About 1.84 million cases of children aged 6-59 months in Somalia will likely suffer from acute malnutrition between January and December 2026, including 483,000 children who are likely to be severely malnourished.



SAM and MAM Estimates by Region | January - December 2026



Recommended Actions



**Urgently scale up and sustain lifesaving humanitarian and nutrition assistance** in areas where acute food insecurity and acute malnutrition overlap (IPC Phase 3 and above during February–March 2026), and advocate for increased funding to support an effective nationwide response.



**Strengthen area-based coordination** and adopt a multi-sector approach to deliver integrated food, nutrition, health, WASH, and other sectoral interventions that maximize efficiency and impact. Improve targeting of assistance to reach those most in need.



**Advocate for maternal, infant, young child, and adolescent nutrition interventions** to address immediate and underlying causes of acute malnutrition, with an emphasis on promoting optimal infant and young child feeding practices.



**Enhance early warning and anticipatory action** as cost-effective ways to mitigate the impact of predictable climatic shocks before they escalate into full-scale disasters.



**Improve humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding coordination** to address the underlying causes of acute food insecurity and malnutrition.

IPC Analysis Partners:

