

Up to 2.1 million people in Somalia face acute food insecurity Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse outcomes in late 2020

Approximately 850 000 children likely to be acutely malnourished

September 30, 2020, Mogadishu/Washington – Due to the combined effects of widespread and severe flooding, Desert Locust infestation, socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 and the cumulative impacts of previous shocks, up to 2.1 million people across Somalia are expected to face food consumption gaps or depletion of assets indicative of Crisis (IPC Phase 3)¹ or worse outcomes through December 2020 in the absence of humanitarian assistance. In addition, 849 900 children under the age of five are likely to be acutely malnourished through August 2021. Sustained and large-scale humanitarian assistance and government support are currently preventing more severe outcomes in many areas. Desert Locust continues to pose a serious risk of damage to both pasture and crops at least until the end of 2020. The 2020 *Deyr* (October-December) rainfall season is likely to be below average to average across the country, which could lead to drought and trigger a worsening of the humanitarian situation if the 2021 *Gu* (April-June) season rainfall is also delayed or performs poorly. These findings reflect the outcome of the 2020 post-*Gu* seasonal food security and nutrition assessment conducted across Somalia during July and August 2020. The assessment and the subsequent analyses were jointly led by the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU, a project managed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) and the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET, a project funded by USAID) with the active participation of Government institutions, UN and NGO partners.

The 2020 *Gu* season exhibited erratic performance. The rains started as early as late March in many parts of Somalia, then intensified and expanded in April, with heavy rain leading to riverine and flash floods. However, rainfall in May was widely below average. Severe riverine and flash floods in April and early May caused significant population displacement and damage to property, infrastructure, farmland, and crops. Atypically heavy rain since July led to further riverine flooding and flood-related damage. Overall, however, the *Hagaa/Karan* (July-September) rains have been mostly favorable in agropastoral and pastoral livelihood zones.

2020 *Gu* cereal production in southern Somalia is estimated at 74 000 tons. This is 40 percent lower than the long-term average for 1995-2019. The main factors for below-average 2020 *Gu* cereal production include: recurrent and severe flooding, erratic rainfall and a prolonged dry spell, insecurity and conflict. The Desert Locust infestation has been mostly confined to northern and central Somalia, causing damage to crops, fruit trees and pasture. In the northwest, 2020 *Gu/Karan* cereal harvest expected in November is estimated at 22 500 tons. This is 45 percent below the 2010-2019 average, mainly due to erratic rainfall and Desert Locust.

Carryover water and pasture from the 2019 *Deyr* season supported livestock through the dry 2020 *Jilaal* (January-March) season. Although some Desert Locust damage occurred in northern and central regions, heavy 2020 *Gu* and *Hagaa/Karan* rains have moderated the impact and replenished pasture and browse across Somalia. As a result, current pasture, browse and water availability across most of Somalia is adequate to support livestock at least through the start of the 2020 *Deyr* season rainfall in October. Favorable pasture and water conditions since late 2019 have led to positive growth in livestock holdings, especially in the South. However, livestock holdings and milk production remain below normal in most northern and central regions. Pasture and water availability will likely decline towards the end of the year due to the anticipated below-average *Deyr* season rainfall.

In pastoral livelihood zones, the favorable 2020 *Gu* rainfall season had positive impacts on the food security and livelihoods of most pastoral households. However, some poor pastoral households in northern and central Somalia will continue to face moderate to large food consumption gaps as they have limited livestock holdings to cope with current and anticipated shocks through the end of 2020. In agropastoral livelihood zones, erratic rainfall, the extended dry spell, and Desert Locust led to significant reductions in household stocks and income from the 2020 *Gu* season cereal harvest and agricultural employment. As a result, some poor agropastoral households will face moderate to large food consumption gaps through the end of 2020. In riverine livelihoods of southern Somalia, devastating floods since April 2020 destroyed farmland and crops and caused population displacement, leading to significant crop losses and the loss of income from agricultural employment. Consequently, a significant proportion of poor households in riverine livelihoods will face moderate to large food consumption gaps through the end of 2020.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs), a majority of whom are poor and live in urban areas in desperate conditions, have limited livelihood assets and coping options and rely more heavily on external humanitarian assistance. As a result, a significant proportion of IDPs continue to face moderate to large food consumption gaps. Some of the urban poor across Somalia who struggle to make ends meet also continue to face moderate to large food consumption gaps. For both groups (i.e. IDPs and urban poor), the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 was a factor, associated with a decline in remittances, increased food prices, and a decline in employment and other income-earning opportunities in urban areas.

Despite multiple shocks in 2020, high levels of sustained humanitarian assistance and government support have played a critical role in stabilizing and preventing worse acute food insecurity outcomes in Somalia. According to the Somalia Food Security Cluster, an average of 1.85 million people received food assistance monthly from April to August. Approximately 400 000 people also benefitted from government-led rural and urban safety net programmes. In April, government has also enacted a 20-100 percent tax exemption on imported food commodities in order to mitigate the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on the population. Based on results of assessments conducted in July and August 2020, approximately 1.3 million people are currently facing Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or

¹ The 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: IPC Phase 1=Minimal; Phase 2=Stressed; Phase 3=Crisis; Phase 4=Emergency; and Phase 5=Famine at the area level (Phase 5=Catastrophe at the household group level).

higher) outcomes through September 2020 in the presence of humanitarian food assistance. An additional 2.5 million people are Stressed (IPC Phase 2), bringing the total number of people experiencing acute food insecurity to 3.8 million.

However, weather and Desert Locust hazards threaten to increase the acutely food insecure population in late 2020. The consensus climate forecast released in late August by the Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum (GHACOF56) indicates an elevated likelihood of below-average to average rainfall across Somalia during the October to December 2020 *Deyr* rainfall season. Damage from Desert Locust could exacerbate the impact of a below-average 2020 *Deyr* season. As of September, Government-led control operations have reduced Desert Locust swarms in Somaliland and Puntland. However, there are an increasing number of adult groups in central Somalia (Galgadud). Desert Locust will likely continue to pose a serious risk to both pasture and crops across Somalia through late 2020, and the situation requires continued close monitoring and scaling up of control measures.

From October to December, food insecurity is expected to deteriorate among poor households with limited livestock or low capacity to cope with harvest losses. However, based on recent and anticipated livestock births, favorable livestock prices and demand, and stable imported food prices, Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are expected to be less widespread than previously projected. Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are expected in Guban Pastoral, East Golis Pastoral of Northwest, Togdheer Agropastoral, Coastal Deeh Pastoral of Central, Bay Bakool Low Potential Agropastoral, and several riverine areas of Hiiraan, Middle Shabelle, and Middle and Lower Juba. Food security is also expected to worsen among IDPs, with Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes expected across most of the main IDP settlements as significant proportions of IDP households are unable to meet their minimum food needs without external assistance. The projections do not factor the potential impact of food assistance, as information on planned and funded food and cash assistance through December 2020 was not available at the time of the analysis.

In summary, 2.1 million people across Somalia are expected to face Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or higher) outcomes between now and December without sustained humanitarian assistance. An additional 3 million people are expected to be Stressed (IPC Phase 2), bringing the total number of people facing acute food insecurity to 5.1 million. Humanitarian assistance must be sustained through December 2020 to prevent Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes for 2.1 million people. Livelihoods support is also required for people that are Stressed or worse (IPC Phase 2 or higher).

Regions	Population (2014)	Number of Acutely Food Insecure People (Rural, IDP and Urban Combined)					
		Current (July-September 2020)			Projected (October-December 2020)		
		Stressed (IPC 2)	Crisis (IPC 3)	Emergency (IPC 4)	Stressed (IPC 2)	Crisis (IPC 3)	Emergency (IPC 4)
Awdal	724,573	173,000	53,000	33,000	195,000	99,000	37,000
W. Galbeed	1,321,524	298,000	79,000	60,000	337,000	156,000	67,000
Togdheer	755,793	128,000	41,000	11,000	167,000	85,000	18,000
Sool	360,432	75,000	25,000	14,000	95,000	47,000	27,000
Sanaag	562,067	122,000	59,000	31,000	148,000	83,000	43,000
Bari	712,934	169,000	79,000	32,000	193,000	128,000	33,000
Nugaal	337,588	88,000	42,000	12,000	97,000	52,000	14,000
Mudug	627,723	167,000	65,000	3,000	184,000	111,000	7,000
Galgaduud	427,809	109,000	36,000	-	124,000	58,000	1,000
Hiraan	422,993	71,000	24,000	9,000	90,000	62,000	12,000
M. Shabelle	436,759	71,000	27,000	5,000	94,000	37,000	7,000
L. Shabelle	911,502	144,000	60,000	6,000	190,000	77,000	12,000
Bay	846,600	181,000	91,000	23,000	241,000	164,000	36,000
Bakool	284,353	35,000	22,000	5,000	51,000	31,000	7,000
Gedo	430,943	109,000	34,000	11,000	123,000	58,000	11,000
M. Juba	286,538	47,000	31,000	9,000	52,000	35,000	6,000
L. Juba	648,936	108,000	66,000	9,000	134,000	100,000	12,000
Banadir	2,228,463	427,000	149,000	25,000	495,000	322,000	50,000
TOTAL	12,327,530	2,522,000	983,000	298,000	3,010,000	1,705,000	400,000

According to results from 37 separate nutrition surveys conducted by FSNAU and partners in July and August 2020, there has been some improvement in the overall nutrition situation among rural and urban populations compare to previous seasons. However, the nutrition situation among IDPs has shown no improvement. For population groups that registered a high prevalence of acute malnutrition, contributing factors include high morbidity, low immunization and vitamin-A supplementation, and poor care practices and food insecurity. At the national level, the median prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) has remained Serious (10–14.9%) over the past three seasons (11.8% in 2020 *Gu*, 13.1% in 2019 *Deyr* and 13.8% in 2019 *Gu*). Urgent treatment and nutrition support are required for approximately 849 900 children under the age of five years (total acute malnutrition burden), who will likely face acute malnutrition through August 2021, including 143 400 who are likely to be severely malnourished. Integrated interventions should be provided to support recovery and prevent deterioration in the nutrition situation.

Areas and Populations of Concern

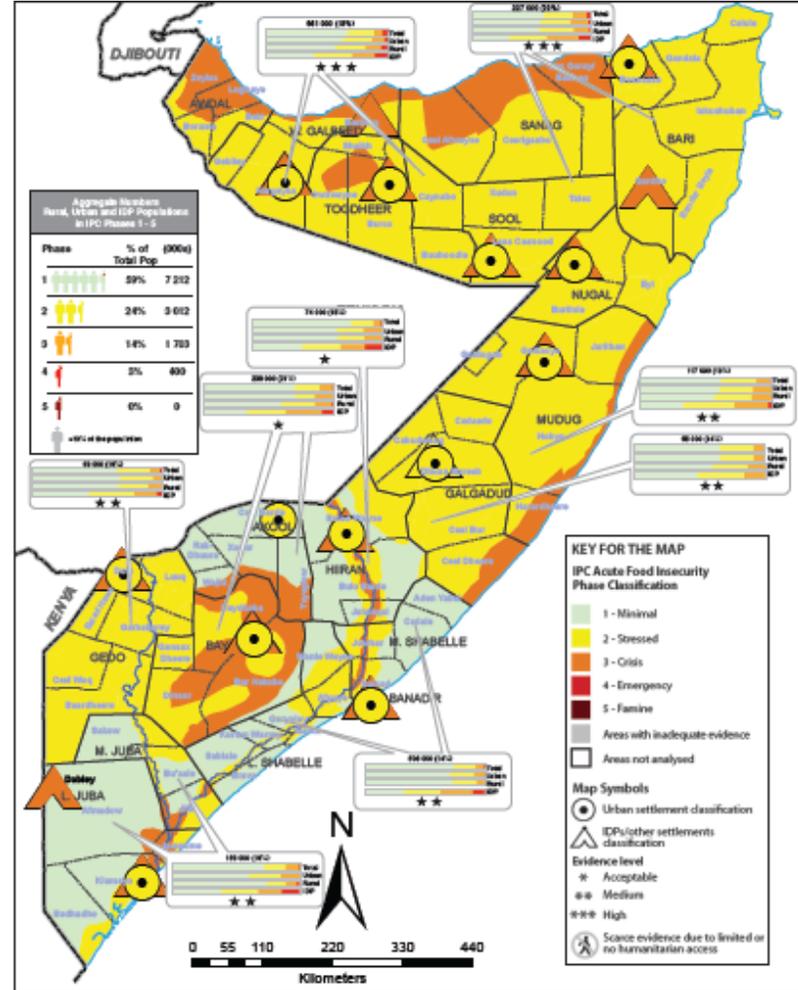
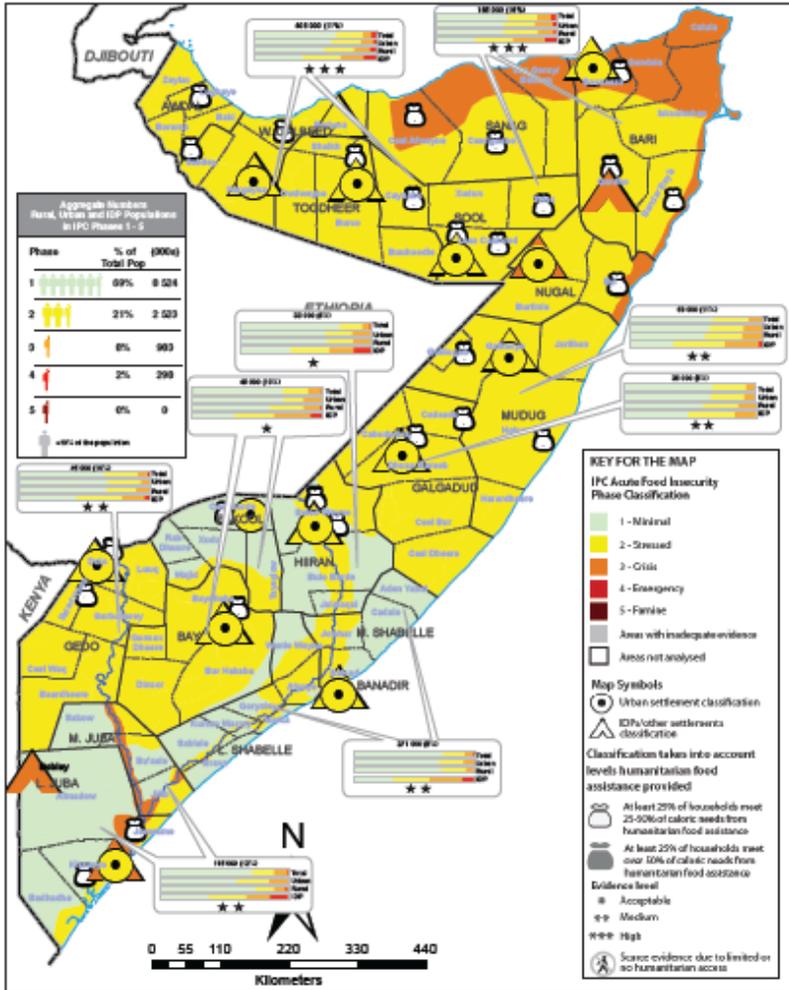
Population groups classified as Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse require interventions aimed at reducing food consumption gaps, eradicating acute malnutrition, saving lives, and protecting and saving livelihoods. The following are considered areas of concern and are in need of urgent nutrition and health support interventions. They currently have or are projected to have a Critical GAM prevalence, indicated by a weight-for-height z-score of 15–29.9% or by a Mid-Upper Arm Circumference below 125 mm of $\geq 10\%$: East Golis Pastoral, Bosasso IDPs, Garowe IDPs, Galkacyo IDPs, Hiran rural, Beletweyne urban, Shabelle Riverine, Mogadishu IDPs, Bosasso IDPs, Baidoa IDPs, Juba Riverine.

FSNAU and FEWS NET will continue to monitor conditions and outcomes and report on the situation. All information will be made available through www.fsnau.org and www.fews.net. For more information, please contact: Alberto TrilloBarca, Communications Officer, FAO Somalia, Tel: + 252 619 154 103/+254 768 055 361, Email: Alberto.TrilloBarca@fao.org or Mike Bennett, Communications Director, Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), Email: fews.media@fews.net.

Somalia Acute Food Insecurity Situation Overview

Current (July-September 2020)

Projection (October-December 2020)



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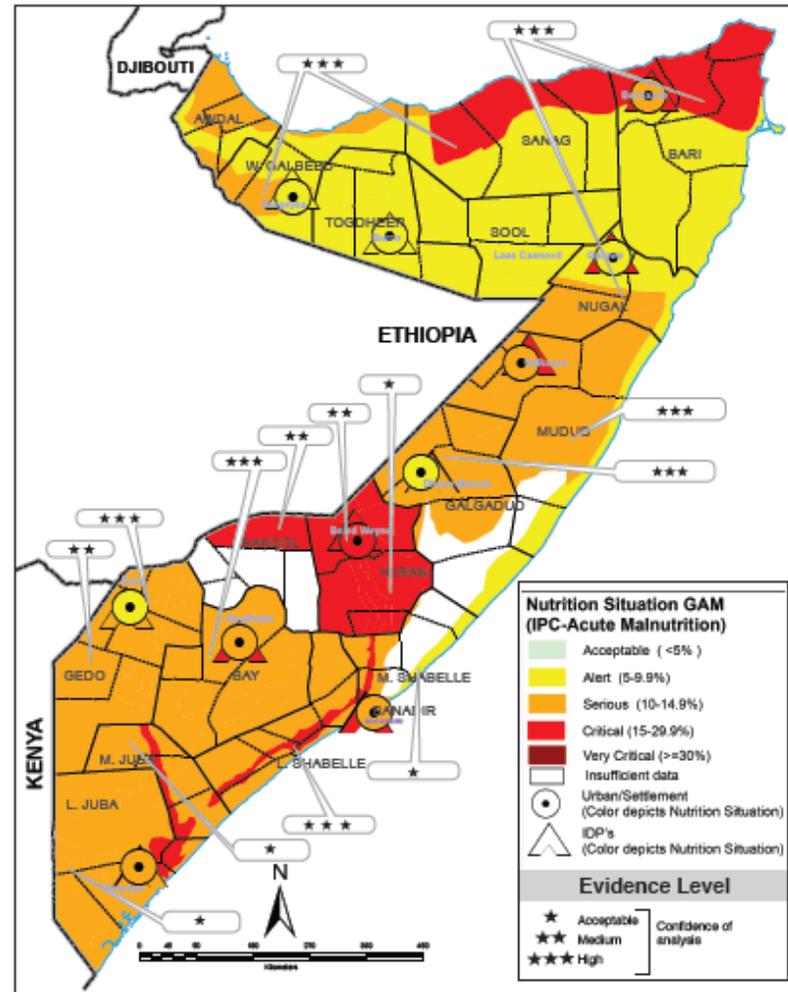
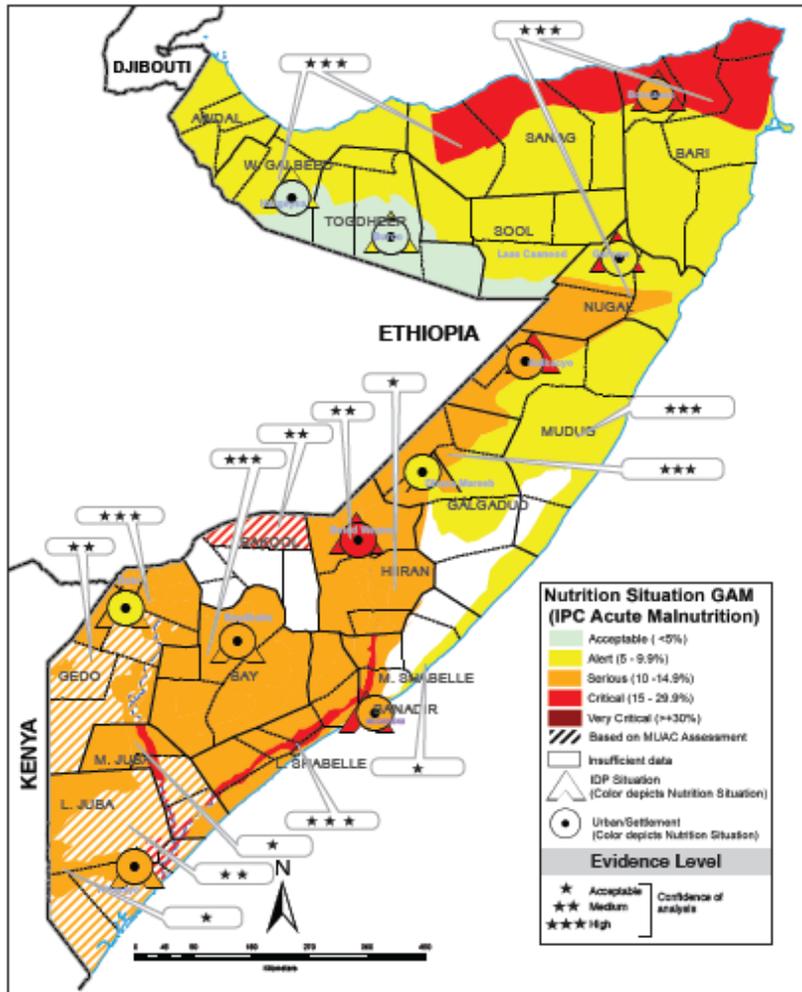
FSNAU Technical Partners: FEWS NET, World Food Programme, World Health Organization, UNICEF, JRC, UNHCR, EUROPEAN COMMISSION

FSNAU Resource Partners: USAID, UKaid, SWEDEN, Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft, Confederazione Svizzera, Confederaziun Svizra, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

Somalia Estimated Nutrition Situation

Current (July-September 2020)

Projection (October-December 2020)



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