

More than 1.5 million people in Somalia still facing acute food security crisis or worse outcomes *903 100 children likely to be acutely malnourished*

February 3, 2019, Mogadishu/Washington – Driven by the impacts of below-average *Deyr* seasonal (October to December 2018) rainfall and large-scale destitution and displacement from the 2016/2017 drought and protracted conflict, more than 1.5 million people in Somalia are expected to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3)¹ or worse through June 2019. In addition, 903 100 children under the age of five are likely to be acutely malnourished in 2019, according to findings from the post-*Deyr* seasonal assessment conducted in November and December 2018. Pastoral populations face depleted rangeland resources and limited saleable animals, while agropastoral households harvested below-average *Deyr* agricultural production. As of January, sustained and large-scale humanitarian assistance has prevented worse food security outcomes in many areas. The forecast average *Gu* (April to June 2019) rains and mostly favorable market conditions are expected to mitigate more severe deterioration in food security conditions through mid-2019. 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 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.

The consensus forecast released at the end of August 2018 by the Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum (GHACOF50), which indicated a greater likelihood of normal to above-normal *Deyr* rainfall, did not materialize. The *Deyr* rains started late and were significantly below average across most of the country, with large parts of central Somalia and some parts of northern Somalia receiving 25-50 percent of average rainfall. No river or flash floods were reported. Water and dry pasture from the previous *Gu* (April-June) and carryover stocks from above-average *Gu* season crop production, which was harvested in July, have helped to moderate the adverse impacts of poor *Deyr* rainfall. However, browse and water conditions are below-average in parts of Northern Inland Pastoral, northern Hawd Pastoral, and central Addun Pastoral livelihood zones, as well as in Southern Agropastoral livelihood zone of Hiiran region. A major concern in northern and central pastoral livelihood zones is water scarcity, which has already triggered earlier-than-normal water trucking at high prices, a condition that is expected to worsen during the dry *Jilaal* (January–March) season before gradually improving with the start of the *Gu* rains in April. While livestock migration is normal across most parts of the country, livestock migration options in central regions are constrained due to insecurity.

Livestock that conceived in previous seasons gave birth in the *Deyr* and, as a result, milk availability has improved to below-average to average in northern and central regions and to average to above-average in southern Somalia. With the price of one goat fetching more than one bag (50kg) of cereals, livestock-to-cereal terms of trade remains broadly favorable. However, in northern and central regions, where significant livestock loss occurred during consecutive periods of drought in 2016/2017, the availability of saleable animals remains low, constraining the ability of poor households to feed their families and purchase water for their animals.

2018 *Deyr* season cereal production in southern Somalia is estimated at 76 600 tons, including 4 500 tons of off-season harvests expected in late February/early March, which is 22 percent lower than the long-term average for 1995-2017. In the northwest, the 2018 *Gu/Karan* cereal production harvested in November is estimated at 11 000 tons, which is 76 percent lower than the 2010-2017 average due to poor and erratic rainfall and high levels of pest incidence and bird attacks.

Data obtained from the Somalia Food Security Cluster indicates that large-scale, emergency food assistance has continued across Somalia, reaching 1.8 to 2 million people per month between August and December 2018, and this has prevented worse food security outcomes in many areas. As a result, most rural areas in northern Somalia are currently classified as Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) in the presence of assistance, while Guban Pastoral livelihood zone is currently classified as Crisis! (IPC Phase 3!).

An estimated 2.6 million people across Somalia remain internally displaced, either scattered among host communities in rural areas or living in formal and informal settlements on the fringes of urban areas. Post-*Deyr* assessment results indicate that most of the 14 primary IDP settlements are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or Stressed! (IPC Phase 2!) in the presence of humanitarian assistance. In most urban areas, declining or stable food prices and employment opportunities have helped to sustain food security outcomes in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) or Minimal (IPC Phase 1). However, households in urban areas in Awdal and Sool regions are facing food consumption gaps and are classified as Crisis (IPC Phase 3), driven by high cost of living and local currency depreciation.

Following the current harsh *Jilaal* (January-March) dry season, the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Climate Prediction Center (NOAA/CPC)'s long-range forecast indicates a greater likelihood of normal 2019 *Gu* (April-June) rainfall across Somalia, except in coastal areas of the Shabelle and Juba regions, which may experience a dry spell in May. As a result, pasture and water availability, crop cultivation, livestock production, access to agricultural employment, and water and food prices are expected to improve

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 area level (Phase 5= Catastrophe at household group level).

toward the end of the projection period between April and June 2019.

Food security is expected to deteriorate in parts of northern and central Somalia from February to June 2019. Many northern and central agropastoral and pastoral livelihoods will deteriorate to Crisis (IPC Phase 3) until May/June, when the onset of *Gu* rainfall leads to improved livestock productivity, livestock births increasing saleable animals, and increased agricultural labor opportunities. In the absence of assistance, food security outcomes are expected to deteriorate to Emergency (IPC Phase 4) in Guban Pastoral livelihood zone and to Crisis (IPC Phase 3) in central Addun Pastoral, Northern Inland Pastoral, East Golis Pastoral of Sanaag, northwestern Hawd Pastoral, Southern Agropastoral of Hiiran and Bay-Bakool Low Potential Agropastoral livelihood zones. More than 1.5 million people will face Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or higher) through June 2019. An additional 3.4 million people are classified as Stressed (IPC Phase 2), which brings the total number of people in Somalia facing acute food insecurity through mid-2019 to 4.9 million. Those facing acute food security Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse urgently need humanitarian assistance through June 2019 to prevent further deterioration. Livelihood support is also required for people categorized as Stressed or worse (IPC Phase 2 or higher).

Results from 38 separate nutrition surveys conducted by FSNAU and partners in November and December 2018 indicate the overall nutrition situation in Somalia has improved due to better food security conditions, reduced outbreak of disease, and sustained humanitarian interventions. At the national level, acute malnutrition has remained stable due to relatively low morbidity and sustained nutrition and health related interventions and support. The median prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) has remained Serious (10–14.9%) over the past three seasons (12.6% in 2018 *Deyr*, 14.0% in 2018 *Gu* and 13.8% in 2017 *Deyr*). However, a high level of acute malnutrition persists across Somalia due to a combination of factors, including food insecurity, high morbidity, low immunization and vitamin-A supplementation, and poor care practices. A Critical ($\geq 4.5\%$) prevalence of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) was observed in Bakool Southern Inland Pastoral livelihood zone. The Crude Death Rate (CDR) was Critical (1 to $<2/10\ 000/\text{day}$) in West Golis Pastoral and northwestern Hawd Pastoral, while morbidity rates remain high ($>20\%$) in half of the populations surveyed. The nutrition situation in Sorghum High Potential Agropastoral livelihood zone of Bay and Southern Agropastoral livelihood zone of Hiiran are expected to deteriorate from Serious to Critical from February to April 2019. Urgent treatment and nutrition support is required for an estimated 903 100 children under the age of five years (total acute malnutrition burden) who will likely face acute malnutrition through December 2019, including 138 200 who are likely to be severely malnourished. Integrated support interventions should be sustained to support recovery and prevent deterioration in the nutrition situation.

Areas and Populations of Concern

Populations 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.

Regions	Total Population (2014 Estimates)	Number of Acutely Food Insecure People (February – June 2019)		
		Stressed (IPC 2)	Crisis (IPC 3)	Emergency (IPC 4)
Awdal	673,264	195,000	142,000	31,000
Woqooyi Galbeed	1,242,003	480,000	192,000	14,000
Togdheer	721,363	283,000	123,000	6,000
Sanaag	544,123	245,000	116,000	1,000
Sool	327,427	133,000	100,000	-
Bari	730,147	264,000	113,000	7,000
Nugaal	392,698	99,000	39,000	-
Mudug	717,862	220,000	84,000	-
Galgaduud	569,434	205,200	45,000	2,000
Hiraan	520,686	101,000	54,000	-
Middle Shabelle	516,035	69,000	12,000	-
Lower Shabelle	1,202,219	109,000	26,000	-
Banadir	1,650,228	537,000	99,000	50,000
Bay	792,182	147,000	176,000	12,000
Bakool	367,227	59,000	19,000	-
Gedo	508,403	54,000	24,000	5,000
Middle Juba	362,921	69,000	6,000	-
Lower Juba	489,307	123,000	46,000	11,000
TOTAL	12,327,529	3,392,200	1,416,000	139,000

The following areas of concern are considered hotspots in need of urgent nutrition and health support interventions. They have a Critical prevalence of acute malnutrition ($\geq 15\%$ GAM) or ≥ 10.7 percent of children have a Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) below the 125 millimeter threshold. They are: Guban Pastoral, Northern Inland Pastoral, East Golis Pastoral, Beletweyne District (Southern Agro-pastoral), Southern Inland Pastoral of Bakool region, Sorghum High Potential Agropastoral of Bay and Shabelle regions, as well as IDP Populations in Qardho, Mogadishu and Baidoa.

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: Lisa Ratcliffe, Communications Officer, FAO Somalia, Tel: +252 613 382 539/+254 741 068 834, Email: lisa.ratcliffe@fao.org and Marie Maroun, Communications officer, Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), Tel: +1 202 524 7749, Email: mmaroun@fews.net

