HIGHLIGHTS

- The ongoing drought in the Horn of Africa is affecting close to 7 million in Ethiopia and is increasingly deteriorating the living conditions and livelihoods of affected communities in Oromia, Somali, South Western Ethiopia, and SNNP regions primarily.

- Over 1 million of people in 21 woredas of East and West Hararge in Oromia are living in dire condition where water tracking gap stands at 70 per cent, calling for an urgent need for additional 42 trucks in both zones.

- The drought situation in West Guji Zone of Oromia Region continues to have a severe impact and repercussions on the lives of affected communities, with over 27,000 children and 22,000 young women are facing serious protection concerns.

Drought ravages lives and livelihoods in parts of Southeastern Ethiopia

The current drought in the Horn of Africa, is affecting close to 7 million people in Ethiopia and worsening the living conditions of the affected communities in Oromia, Somali, South Western Ethiopia, and SNNP regions primarily. An emergency response is ongoing and is further required for at least the next five months to save lives and livelihoods and prevent further deterioration of an already extremely dire humanitarian situation with increasing protection concerns for which additional funding is urgently required.

Some 3.5 million people are facing the consequences of the drought in Oromia Region, including 1 million in East and West Hararge

In Oromia, the regional Government authorities finalized a drought response plan to address the needs of around 3.5 million people facing the consequences of the drought. This includes more than one million people in 21 woredas in East and West Hararge zones who are living in dire conditions with limited access to water supplies with a water trucking gap of 70 per cent and an urgent need for an additional 42 trucks in both zones. The drought conditions left some 334 schools (123 West Hararge and 211 East Hararge), accommodating over 300,000 students, without access to water supply, forcing the closure of some 40 schools in Hawi Gudina woreda. There are also reports of increasing livestock migration (about 377,000 from East Hararge and over 400,000 from West Hararge) and livestock deaths in both zones. The number of affected people is expected to increase and more families continue to migrate in search of water, pasture, and food. The seasonal Belg rain which was expected to start in mid-February is already delayed, further exacerbating the situation. Humanitarian partners are scaling-up the response in the affected areas, but more resources and increased partners presence need to be urgently mobilized to support the life-saving response, avoid further loss of livestock and start rebuilding of livelihoods.

Figure 1 A pastoralist in Kumbi woreda, East Hararge, helping his cow, weakened by drought, to stand. Photo Credit: Kombi Woreda DRMO
HIGHLIGHTS

• More than 3 million people are hugely impacted by the drought in the Somali Region of whom about 2.4 million need immediate water support.

• Over 900,000 livestock deaths reported across drought affected areas of Somali region due to serious shortage of pasture and water.

• Close to 80,000 people and 1.5 million livestock are estimated to have migrated to Fafan Zone from other drought-affected areas resulting in increasing strain on already scarce resources, adding to the 4.45 million livestock already present in the zone.

• Violence in Benishangul Gumuz Region (BGR) continues to have a devastating impact on the lives of affected communities and heavily constraining the day-to-day humanitarian operations in the region.

• Over 410,000 people (almost 46 per cent of the total population) are displaced in three zones of BGR, including 77,925 children under-5 and 20,135 breastfeeding mothers who need immediate access to humanitarian assistance.

Drought in Guji is posing protection concerns to women and children
According to an assessment report released on 24 February by the Zonal Disaster Risk Management Office (DRMO) and the Women and Children Affairs Office, the drought situation in West Guji Zone, Oromia Region, has ensued in serious protection concerns for more than 27,000 children and 22,000 young women. Affected women and children are exposed to gender-based violence, malnutrition, health issues, and resorting to negative coping mechanisms including begging, early marriage for girls and transitional sex. Meanwhile, reports of diarrhea are emerging in drought-hit Guji and Borena zones due to the use of contaminated water while health centers are running short of medicines and water purifying chemicals. The increased number of diarrhea cases is very concerning and requires prompt response to avoid reaching the level of an outbreak.

About 3 million people continue to suffer from the brunt of drought in Somali region, with over 900,000 reported livestock death
Reports from the regional DRMO in Somali Region indicate that more than three million people are significantly impacted by the drought, including about 2.4 million people in need of immediate water support. Serious shortage of pasture and limited water availability for livestock continue to cause animal deaths, with more than 900,000 livestock (the main livelihood of thousands of people) reportedly perished in drought affected areas in the region to date. A recent rapid assessment by humanitarian partners revealed that close to 80,000 people and 1.5 million livestock are estimated to have migrated to Fafan Zone from other drought-affected areas resulting in increasing strain on already scarce resources, adding to the 4.45 million livestock already present in the zone and may trigger conflict caused by limited access to resources. While over 15,600 households have been supported with food distribution in Dollo, Liban and Dawa zones by the authorities and humanitarian partners, an additional 30,000 households need relief food assistance. At least 477,000 piles of fodder are needed to save the core breeding livestock in the zone.

The latest Ethiopia drought update is available here.

Ongoing violence continues to affect communities and to hinder humanitarian operations in Benishangul Gumuz Region
The violence in Benishangul Gumuz Region (BGR) continues to have a detrimental impact on the lives of affected communities and hamper the humanitarian operations in the region. According to the regional Disaster Risk Management Office (DRMO), more than 410,000 people or almost 46 per cent of the total population of the region, are displaced in Metekel, Kamashi and Assosa zones, including about 78,000 children under five and more than 20,000 pregnant and lactating women who need immediate access to humanitarian assistance, including critical health and nutrition interventions. About 64 per cent of the internally displaced persons (IDPs), are in Meketel zone, 19 per cent are in Kamashi Zone and 17 per cent in Assosa town. The ongoing violence within BGR and in the neighbouring Wellega zones of Oromia Region, and lack of fuel due to road blockage are hindering critical humanitarian operations including the provision of food, water, health, emergency shelter, and non-food items. The IDP response in BGR has been underfunded in 2021 and further limited the delivery of humanitarian interventions.
HIGHLIGHTS

- Measles cases continue to be reported since December 2021 in Doloado and Bokolmayo woredas of Liban Zone, in Somali Region, with about 700 new cases and 12 deaths recorded as of 3rd March. The measles outbreak affected 15 kebeles, including five refugee camps in the zone.

- Some 17 Government officials selected from key Regional Bureaus of Amhara Region that are mandated and involved in interventions in humanitarian settings received a training session on Humanitarian Coordination, Camp Coordination, and Camp Management (CCCM) between 24-25 February.

New cases of measles reported in Oromia, Somali and SNNP Regions

Measles cases continue to be reported since December 2021 in Doloado and Bokolmayo woredas of Liban Zone, in Somali Region, with about 700 new cases and 12 deaths recorded as of 3rd March. While the number of cases recorded has decreased since cases were diagnosed in December 2021, active cases remain. Measles cases have been recorded 15 kebeles, including five refugee camps in the zone. In response, the Regional Health Bureau and the World Health Organization are planning to carry out a measles vaccination campaign targeting children from six months to ten years of age in all woredas of Liban Zone and two neighbouring woredas in Afder (Dolobay and Barey) by the second week of March. Active monitoring and surveillance are carried out in other locations in the region that have reported suspected cases. Similarly, and as of February 25, already new cases were reported in other regions reaching 104 cases in Abaya, Borena zone in Oromia region, and 125 cases in Garda Marta, Gamo Zone in SNNP region.

Camp Coordination, and Camp Management training session conducted to officials in Amhara

Between 24-25 February, training session on Humanitarian Coordination, Camp Coordination, and Camp Management (CCCM) was conducted for 17 Government officials from key regional bureaus who have a key role in interventions in humanitarian settings. The training, which targeted Directors and active members of the regional Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC), was held to raise awareness on the humanitarian situation in the Amhara region, humanitarian coordination mechanisms, humanitarian principles and access; role and responsibilities of camp administration, camp coordination and camp management, protection risks, gender, gender-based violence and inclusion, and education and awareness on the risks associated with unexploded ordnance.
Stories of affected people

“Now I am very much happy to get a nice wheelchair. I can support myself to move around and can travel to places like school so much easier.”

Story originally published by Action Against Hunger

Shoba, a 15-year-old boy from Moyale, was one of the 25 individuals with disabilities who benefited from Action Against Hunger’s Emergency Protection response project for IDPs, returnees and host communities in Borena Zone, in Somali Region. The project was supported by the Ethiopia Humanitarian Fund (EHF) - an OCHA-managed pooled fund. Shoba who lives with his mother and eight siblings had his disability since he was nine months old. This has put a lot of pressure on his family, especially on his mother, and impacted her ability to support other family members. Now, Shoba has received a wheelchair, giving him better and independent mobility including attending school.

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