



An IDP woman at Moge IDP settlement in northern Somalia where the poor 2018 Deyr rainy season has severely affected some areas.

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## HIGHLIGHTS

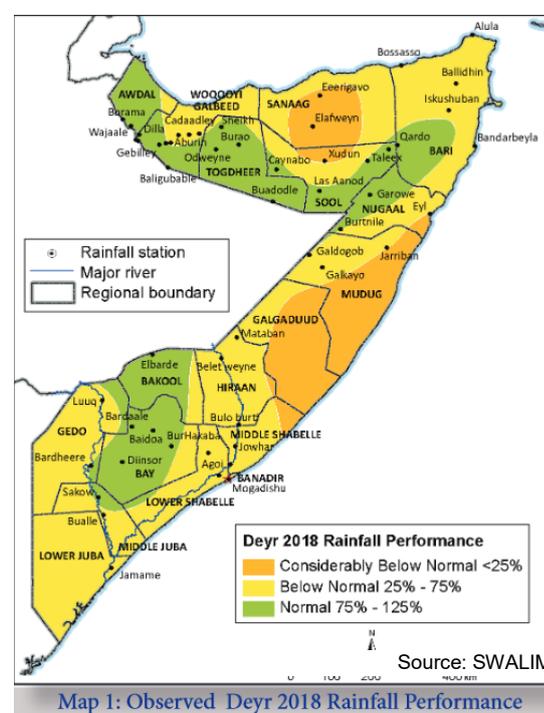
- Deyr rainy season performs poorly, risk of drought in parts of Puntland and Somaliland; early Action needed to prevent a deterioration of the situation.
- The nexus between nutrition and food security;
- Disability and stigmatization in Somalia;
- Insecurity continues to hinder assistance efforts;
- Sustained donor support required in early 2019.

## Deyr season poor, risk of drought in the north

### Drought conditions expected in the north

The 2018 Deyr (October-December) rainy season was below average to poor in many parts of Somalia. Drought conditions are expected to develop, mainly in most parts of northeast and central regions of the country, and situation is expected to worsen until the Gu rainy season in April 2019, according to the FAO-led Somalia Water and Land Information Management (SWALIM) and Food Security and Nutrition Analysis unit (FSNAU). Areas such as Sool, Sanaag, Bari and Nugaal are among the worst affected by the poor rains.

The Deyr season started off well in the northern areas but ended early. Most parts of Somaliland received poor rains, with the eastern areas recording no or insignificant rains. Mild to moderate drought conditions are now expected in these areas. Below normal to poor rains were received across Puntland and some areas in Galmudug. Vegetation conditions in these areas have already deteriorated. Earlier than normal livestock migration in search of pasture and water trucking have also been reported in parts of Bari and Nugaal regions of Puntland. The situation is expected to deteriorate further by the next Gu rainy season.



## FIGURES

# of food insecure people 4.6m

# of people in humanitarian emergency and crisis (IPC Phases 3 &4) 1.5m

# of people Emergency (IPC Phase 4) 0.2m

# of children projected to be malnourished 1.2m

# of people displaced internally by drought since November 2016 1.6m

# of people in protracted internal displacement 1.1m

## FUNDING

**\$1.5 BILLION**

requested in the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan

**\$842.4 MILLION**

Total humanitarian funding received towards the 2018 HRP

Source <http://fts.unocha.org>, 30 Dec 2018

## Somalia Humanitarian Crisis Timeline, 2018

### January

- Risk of famine declines.
- 5.4m people in need of assistance.

### February

- Areas in the north face high levels of food insecurity.

### March

- 4.7m children targeted in measles vaccination.
- Donors pledge sustained humanitarian support to Somalia.

### April

- The *Gu* rainy season begins, brings flooding

### May

- Cyclone Sagar leaves trail of destruction in the north, aid agencies step up response.
- Flooding worsens affecting 800,000 people, response plan launched.
- Clashes in Sool region, leading to civilian displacement

### June

- The *Gu* rainy season ends.
- 2.6m people are internally displaced.
- New Minister of Humanitarian Affairs appointed.

### July

- Somalia Partnership Forum held in Brussels, Belgium.
- 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan revised.

of the river levels will affect riverine activities, including off-season planting and pump irrigation.

Meanwhile, the prices of local cereals (maize and sorghum) remained relatively stable across the country and lower than the same time last year, which has been attributed to the improved *Gu* season harvests this year. On the other hand, the prices of imported food (rice, sugar, vegetable oil and wheat flour) slightly increased in most central and south areas compared to last year. Livestock prices were higher in most regions due to improved livestock body conditions this year compared to last year.

### Early action required to prevent deterioration in the north

The need for the immediate early action and targeted scale up of humanitarian response has been recommended by the inter-agency mission to Somaliland and Puntland in early December, in order to prevent the deterioration of the humanitarian situation, due to the poorly performing 2018 *Deyr* rains.



Humanitarian partners are providing food assistance to vulnerable drought and conflict affected communities in Sool. (Photo/TASCO)

most affected areas include the Northern Inland Pastoral livelihoods zone, stretching through the conflict-affected southern Sanaag and northern Sool, the southern Bari and northern Nugaal, as well as Guban (Awdal), Togdheer Agropastoral and parts of Deeh (Bari, Nugaal) livelihoods zones.

The 2018 *Gu* rains only provided temporary relief in some areas. Multiple cycles of drought, other climatic shocks and environmental degradation, as well as inter-clan conflict and political tensions, have decimated communities' income and livelihood opportunities, and deeply eroded their ability to resist to shocks.

Humanitarian partners and the authorities are working jointly to identify the high-priority areas, but the available resources will not suffice to ensure the immediate sufficient scale-up in assistance. The currently available funds from the Somalia Humanitarian Fund (SHF) are being prioritized for the immediate response as partners are also working towards identifying other resource opportunities and scaling up the advocacy, including to secure support for more resilience and longer-term interventions.

## The nexus between nutrition and food security

The worrying high malnutrition rates across the country, with overall median levels of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) at 14 per cent, have continued to raise concern. Nearly a million children under the age of five are projected to be acutely malnourished in 2019, including

The deficit or absence of *Deyr* rains, followed by a longer-than-average dry season (*Jilal*) is likely to lead to the deterioration in food security for the most vulnerable households in the rural areas, particularly in the north-eastern parts, that rely heavily on agricultural and livestock production. The shift of the population from IPC 2 to IPC 3, and IPC3 to IPC 4 might occur in the first months of 2019, prompting further displacements.

The poor 2018 *Deyr* season follows several consecutive below-average or failed rainy seasons, mainly in the north, and has severely affected some areas since the onset of the 2015 drought. The

timeline continued...

### August

- Food security improves, nutrition situation remains worrying.
- Surge in forced evictions.
- Children under 5 targeted in polio vaccination campaign
- SHF releases \$7.5million for areas in the north.

### September

- The *Deyr* rainy season begins.
- Fighting leads to new displacement in Lower Shabelle.

### October

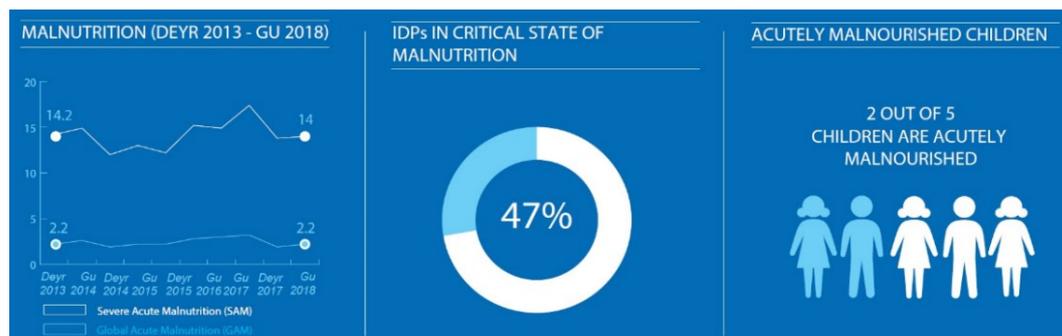
- Aid agencies step up livelihoods, resilience support.
- Inter-clan conflict in Sool leads to displacement
- Major disease outbreaks contained.

### November

- *Deyr* season rains underperforming.
- 4.2 million people estimated to require assistance in 2019.
- Humanitarian funding reaches almost \$1.1 billion

### December

- *Deyr* season concludes with below-average rains, elevated risk of drought in the north.



173,600 expected to be severely malnourished. The improvements in food security, a reduction in communicable disease outbreaks and sustained humanitarian intervention, have not yet translated into an improvement in the overall nutrition situation.

Although recent surveys indicate slight improvements in malnutrition in a few areas, the situation remains stagnant in many other. The trends in GAM prevalence (weight for height) remain at serious levels compared to six months earlier. This indicates that improved food security has not translated into improved food consumption, dietary energy intake, and overall diet quality and diversity in Somalia.

According to nutrition experts, food insecurity is only one of the causes of malnutrition. Other contributing factors include health, WASH, protection, health-seeking behaviors and cultural norms. Key drivers of the current high malnutrition rates are food insecurity such as low diet diversity at household levels, limited availability of health services, increased morbidity, poor health seeking behaviors and difficulty in accessing clean water/adequate sanitation.

The high levels of child acute malnutrition have been attributed to the complex emergency situation in Somalia characterized by conflict, displacement, drought and disease outbreaks. The internally displaced people (IDPs) on the other hand face considerable challenges with high numbers of female-headed households fighting high levels of acute malnutrition. Mothers are forced to leave their children and infants without proper care for hours during the day while they search for casual jobs. They are also susceptible to frequent forced evictions, which leave them with limited sanitation/hygiene facilities and appropriate shelter.



In 2018, humanitarians have reached 177,000 children with life-saving treatment of severe acute malnutrition, almost all recovered. (UNICEF-Somalia).

In addition, individuals or households may lack access to nutrition services due to age, gender, social discrimination or specific vulnerabilities such as disability and marginalization. The influx of IDPs into major urban centers is compounding the situation and straining the already limited resources. Some studies also show a strong correlation of high prevalence of malnutrition and poor water and sanitation, poor health-seeking behavior, and sub-optimal child feeding practices.

The 2015 Nutrition Causality Analysis (NCA) study, indicates that the causes of acute malnutrition are multiple and complex. They include less known underlying drivers in need of urgent attention, as well as factors already documented. The NCA research has

confirmed that as well as insecurity, climatic and seasonal factors and notable poverty amongst some communities, dominant child care practices and select socio-cultural beliefs, remain core drivers of malnutrition in south and central Somalia. This is due to their negative impact on lives, livelihoods and nutrition status of the communities studied. In all the communities studied, weak infant and child feeding and care, combined with poor hygiene, the lack of basic health and WASH facilities and women's excessive workloads are seen to have a major impact.

Similarly, the 2016 Infant and Young Child Nutrition (IYCN) assessment showed an increase in the prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months from 5.3 per cent (2009) to 33 per cent (2016). The number of infants breastfed within one hour of delivery was high during the survey. By the age of six to eight months, 80 per cent of infants and young children had been introduced to solid, semi-solid or soft foods. This positive trend can partly be attributed to increasing the IYCN interventions.

However, providing the recommended number of meals and ensuring that they contain at least four food groups (as per the minimum acceptable diet), as well as iron-rich foods, is still a challenge in most areas. The proportion of children under age five, who meet the requirements for a minimum acceptable diet remains unacceptably low, at nine per cent. Bottle feeding, which is not a recommended practice, was found to be common among half of the caregivers who participated in the survey. Various factors, including cultural beliefs, affect the implementation of IYCN practices. Access to food and money, as well as education, also influenced IYCN practices.

Considering the complexity of undernutrition, there is a need to develop sustainable solutions with proper coordination and integration with health, agriculture and social protection, among others. Furthermore, there is a need to scale up nutrition sensitive programming grounded on resilience/development, which contributes to curbing rates of undernutrition and improves households coping mechanisms. Continued funding is also required in order to sustain the levels of response, especially for the most vulnerable households.

## Disability and stigmatization in Somalia

Somalia has made some progress in protecting the rights of people with disabilities. In a historic move in October 2018, the Federal Government signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, becoming the 178<sup>th</sup> signatory to the Convention. This offers a platform for sustained advocacy for equity for people living with disabilities. In another significant move, Somalia's parliament in November approved the legislation to establish the National Disability Agency. The legislation now awaits the President's assent.



Designing shoes for children with disabilities in DAN rehabilitation center in Hargeisa

Research conducted by the Knowledge, evidence and learning for development (K4D) shows that people with disability are a particularly marginalized and at risk group within the Somali society. Disability is considered a shameful and sensitive topic, which is rarely discussed in public. This is mainly as a result of the attitudinal, environmental, and institutional barriers. One of the key challenges faced by the people with disabilities is the lack of enforcement of provisions made by the federal constitution, which provides for equal rights for persons with disabilities and prohibits the state from discriminating against them.

The proportion of children under age five, who meet the requirements for a minimum acceptable diet, remains unacceptably low, at nine per cent, in Somalia.

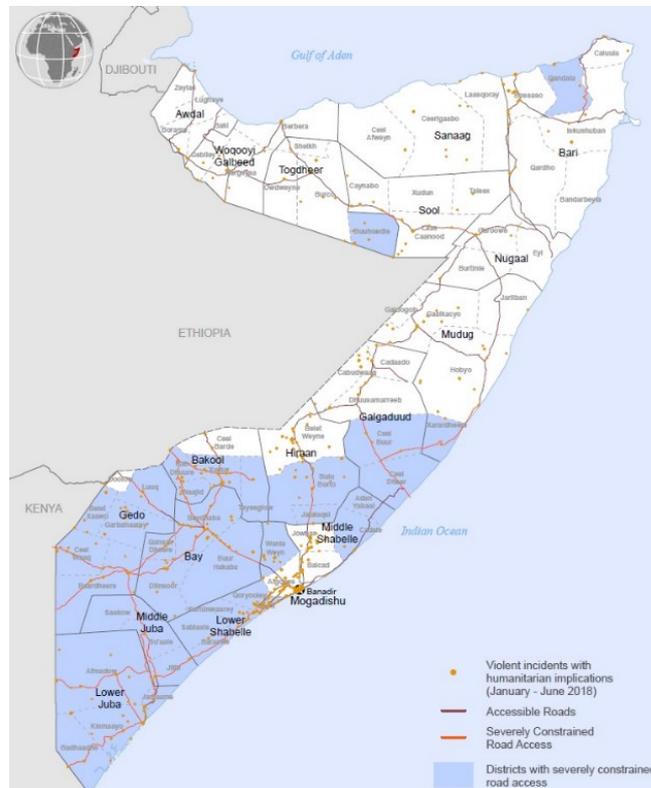
One billion people experience some form of disability (WHO).

In Somaliland, the government has passed a decree to employ 40 persons with disabilities every year in public institutions.

However, in some areas, significant progress has already been made. In Somaliland, for example, the government has passed a decree to employ 40 persons with disabilities every year in public institutions, according to the Disability Action Network (DAN). The government has also supported the Somaliland National Disability Forum (SNDF) with an annual budget of \$40,000 since 2017.

According to WHO, more than one billion people – about 15 per cent of the world's population – experience some form of disability. This figure is predicted to rise given population ageing and an increase in the prevalence of non-communicable diseases. While disability correlates with disadvantage, not all people with disability are equally disadvantaged. Discrimination and exclusion against people with disabilities starts at home. Efforts need to be scaled up to assist people with disability to integrate in society, including through easy access to education, employment and marriage, and the promotion of attitudes to ensure the inclusion of people with disabilities into the society holistically.

## Insecurity continues to hinder assistance efforts



The volatile security situation in Somalia continues to create a challenging operating environment for humanitarian organizations, particularly in south and central Somalia. Between January and November, humanitarian organizations were directly impacted by 122 violent incidents, with nine deaths, 13 injuries, 24 abductions, and the arrest and temporary detention of 18 humanitarian workers. Active hostilities and insecurity continue to displace civilians and disrupt humanitarian assistance efforts.

The number of reported incidents of kidnappings for ransom rose sharply in November. Six humanitarian workers, including community health workers, were kidnapped and held for ransom during the month, leading to temporary suspension of

humanitarian assistance. All six were eventually released following community negotiations. While some of the humanitarian workers were released after a few hours, others were held up to 10 days.

Active hostilities and insecurity continue to displace civilians and disrupt humanitarian assistance efforts.

Violence against humanitarians and humanitarian supplies continues to be reported along the main supply roads in south and central Somalia, particularly along the Jowhar-Mogadishu corridor, Mogadishu-Marka, and parts of Bari, Baidoa, Bakool, Galmudug, Gedo and Hirshabelle. An increase in the number of attacks by non-stated armed actors was reported on the Jowhar-Balcad road since the beginning of the year. The six humanitarian workers abducted in November were seized while moving to programme sites. In the Gedo region, Jubaland state, three abductions of humanitarian workers and seizure of supplies were reported on roads. Road access to Belet Xaawo was severely restricted following the ban on civilian and commercial movements to the town by a non-state armed actor. The ban was reportedly in response to the eviction by local authorities of family members with perceived affiliations to a non-state armed group. Two humanitarian

workers were abducted while moving on the Belet Xaawo road. The reported restrictions form part of a pattern of blockades reported in south and central Somalia in 2018, restricting access to Dinsoor, Qansax, Dheere, Waajid and Xudur in South West State; Garbohaarey in Jubaland; Marka and Bulo Burto in Hirshabelle.

Logistic and security constraints continued to limit air access to locations in Hirshabelle State, particularly Bulo Burto and Belet Weyne. On 28 November, heavy rains flooded the Belet Weyne runway, leading to significant delays and cancellations of flights. Some commercial flights, were diverted to Guri Ceel town, three and a half hours away from Belet Weyne by poor roads. Safety and security concerns have led a number of organizations to avoid road transportation between Guri Ceel and Belet Weyne. Commercial flights to Bulo Burto were reduced after improvised explosive devices (IEDs) were reported at the airstrip. In November, at least seven IEDs were found at the airstrip. Bulo Burto town remains under a reported blockade since 2015, with increasing insecurity directly impacting the local population and the ability of humanitarian organizations to deliver assistance to the area.

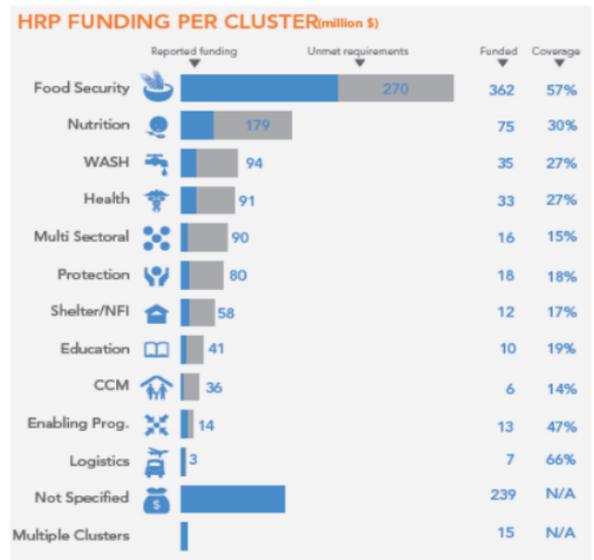
## Continued donor support required in early 2019

Beyond immediate life-saving assistance, enhanced livelihoods and investment in resilience are essential to help address the root causes of the recurring crisis.

Donors have generously contributed US\$1.08 billion to Somalia’s humanitarian operations as of 29 December 2018, allowing humanitarian partners to expand their reach, sustain response and help the most vulnerable. The funding received includes \$840 million against the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and \$237 million for activities outside the HRP, but usually aligned with the HRP strategic objectives.

Disparities in HRP funding across clusters have hindered adequate response. The least funded clusters are CCM, Education, Protection and Shelter, whose interventions ensure a protective environment for the most vulnerable. Less than a third of their requirements have been met. Other key clusters such as Health, Nutrition and WASH, which have contributed to safeguarding the health of communities and providing easy access to safe water, have received less than 30 per cent of their requested funding. This is in contrast to 2017, during which each of the three clusters had more than half of their funding requirements met. The gaps in funding may be a cause of concern in early 2019 before the mainstream funding kicks in.

While humanitarian assistance has been instrumental in preventing a bleak food security outlook in many areas though 2018, sustained funding in early 2019 will be critical to maintain or scale up response, particularly in the northern parts of Somalia, where the situation is likely to deteriorate due to the recently underperformed rains.



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