



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Food  
Programme

## Side Event on the Horn of Africa Drought

on the margins of the First Regular Session of the Executive Board

Tuesday, 21 February 2017, 9:00 – 9:50

Forum, WFP Headquarters

### Context

Widespread drought is affecting much of Somalia, southern and southeastern Ethiopia and northern and coastal Kenya. Parts of eastern South Sudan and eastern Uganda are also affected.

Following the failure of the October–December rains and the poor performance of the main March–June rainy season, drought conditions are intensifying in the Horn of Africa. This drought is the latest in a series of successive dry spells in the region. Households dependent on agriculture and livestock have seen little to no relief in the form of rainfall, and market prices of staple foods are rising. Coping capacities are becoming more eroded, and the implications for food security, nutrition and livelihoods are severe.

It is alarming that Somalia is again on the brink of catastrophe, just five years after the last famine. In Ethiopia, needs are increasing in districts that were not hot spots six months ago as a result of the new drought, while some areas have not yet recovered from the recent El Niño-induced drought. Kenyans in northern and coastal areas are entering a fourth consecutive year of dry conditions. In many drought-affected areas, food insecurity and nutrition is already deteriorating – the impact of this latest shock could be extreme.

Pasture and water resources are critically low across large areas of the region, affecting both humans and the livestock on which they depend for their food and income. Livestock migration within and across borders is increasing, posing transboundary animal disease risks and increasing tensions over limited natural resources, while population movements may follow where needs cannot be met.

The correlations with the 2011 Somalia famine cannot be ignored. Translating early warning in to early action is key to ensure that poor performance of the main season rains does not trigger a major humanitarian crisis with Somalia again at the epicentre.

### Objectives

1. Raise awareness on the developing humanitarian situation in the Horn of Africa and need for early action at scale, particularly to prevent famine in Somalia.
2. Recognize the leading role and ongoing response of governments to the drought.
3. Present challenges and call for early action and enhanced resilience-building alongside emergency response to prevent a catastrophe.

# Agenda

The event will be chaired by Ramiro Lopes da Silva (Assistant Executive Director, Operations Services Department, WFP), along with Valerie Guarnieri (Regional Director for Eastern and Central Africa, WFP) and Dominique Burgeon (Director, Emergency and Rehabilitation Division, FAO). Additional speakers will include FAO and WFP representatives from Ethiopia and Somalia, and government representatives from host and donor countries.

## **Setting the stage – view across the region**

- Welcome and introduction of speakers:
  - Chair: Ramiro Lopes da Silva, Assistant Executive Director, WFP
  
- Food security update:
  - Arif Husain, Deputy Director, Policy and Programme Division, WFP; and
  - Shukri Ahmed, Deputy Strategic Programme Leader, Resilience, FAO
  
- Regional overview:
  - Valerie Guarnieri, Regional Director for Eastern and Central Africa, WFP; and
  - Dominique Burgeon, Director of Emergencies and Rehabilitation, FAO

## **Scaling up the response – country-focused efforts**

- From early warning to early action to prevent famine in Somalia:
  - Laurent Bukera, WFP Country Director and Representative, Somalia; and
  - Richard Trenchard, FAO Country Representative, Somalia
  
- Addressing new needs while supporting recovery:
  - John Aylieff, WFP Country Director, Ethiopia

## **Sustaining the engagement**

- Government representative (Host Government representative proposed)
  
- Government representative (Donor Government representative proposed)
  
- Floor opened for discussion
  
- Response and closing – led by Chair