



WFP East & Central Africa Horn of Africa Drought Crisis Situation Report #01

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Highlights

- The drought in the Horn of Africa is generating a humanitarian crisis in Somalia, with urgent needs also in Kenya and Ethiopia. The number of people in crisis and emergency food insecurity levels (Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) 3 or above) now stands at 11.2 million people, with 2.9 million in Somalia, 5.6 million in Ethiopia, and 2.7 million in Kenya.
- Global acute malnutrition (GAM) levels among children aged 6-59 months, pregnant women and nursing mothers remain a serious concern. Levels of over 25 percent GAM are being reported in some parts of Somalia.
- Governments are leading the planning, implementation and funding of the drought response in Kenya and Ethiopia, with support from humanitarian and development partners.
- This drought is evolving against a backdrop of escalating needs in South Sudan, with over 5 million people also in need of urgent assistance. This is in addition to over 1.2 million South Sudanese refugees who have fled to neighbouring countries.

Situation Update

- The deteriorating food security situation follows the effects of the 2015/2016 El Niño weather event, which caused drought leading to consecutive failed harvests. The situation is expected to deteriorate over the coming weeks as a weak La Niña event and a negative Indian Ocean Dipole have led to delayed and erratic rainfall in large parts of the region, most notably in southern Somalia, southern Ethiopia and parts of Kenya.
- Pasture and water resources are critically low across the region, resulting in significant livestock deaths and crop production losses in Ethiopia, Somalia and northern and coastal Kenya.
- In drought affected areas, cereal prices are rising, while livestock prices and casual labor wage levels are both decreasing due to poor livestock conditions and limited agricultural labor opportunities. As a result, household purchasing power is falling sharply.
- Inter-communal conflict is expected to rise in drought-affected areas as pastoralists trek further afield with their animals looking for water and grazing. Distress migration is being reported between Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan.
- There is growing pressure on the grain markets in Uganda as regional traders face diminishing availability, following the export bans that have taken effect in Tanzania and Kenya.

Country Profiles

Somalia:

- The food security situation has deteriorated significantly, with an increasing number of people now facing IPC levels 3 (crisis) and 4 (emergency) of food insecurity following two consecutive below-average rainy seasons. The poor rainfall performance led to near total crop failure, widespread shortage of water and pasture, increased livestock deaths, and continued increase in food prices resulting in limited household food access.
- The geographical area affected by the current drought is significantly larger than in previous years, expanding from the northern areas of Somaliland and Puntland to the central and southern regions.
- Latest findings of a countrywide seasonal assessment led by the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) further indicate that GAM levels among children aged 6-59 months are above the critical threshold levels, and in some cases exceeding emergency thresholds. Nutrition surveys conducted by FSNAU and partners indicate that 363,000 children aged 6-59 months are acutely malnourished, including 71,000 who are severely malnourished. In Dollo Ado camp in Ethiopia, approximately 3000 refugees have recently arrived from Somalia, and amongst this group, screening of children under 5 has revealed GAM rates exceeding 80 percent. The refugees are reporting hunger and rampant taxation by Al Shabaab as being key reasons for fleeing Somalia.

- Increased insecurity in southern and central Somalia continues to severely impact humanitarian operations. Limited access by humanitarian actors may have a negative impact on the delivery of critical assistance to vulnerable drought affected households.
- WFP's emergency drought response includes immediate relief assistance through unconditional in-kind and cash-based transfers to the most vulnerable people in IPC 3 and 4 in drought-affected areas of northern and south central Somalia. In addition, WFP provides life-saving curative and preventive nutrition services to children under 5, and pregnant and nursing mothers in the drought-affected areas.

Kenya:

- The below average short rains season (October – December) is affecting agricultural and livestock production, reducing food availability and increasing market prices in the marginal agricultural areas along the coast and south east, and the arid pastoral areas in the north.
- The Government of Kenya announced that the number of food insecure people has more than doubled to 2.7 million people following the short rains assessment, up from 1.25 million in September 2016–January 2017.
- The prevalence of moderate acute malnutrition in northern Kenya is above 20 percent, in four counties (Baringo, Mandera, Marsabit and Turkana) and 15 percent, or 'critical', in West Pokot County. Another four counties (Garissa, Samburu, Tana River and Wajir) have 'serious' acute malnutrition (10 percent-14 percent). A total of 333,000 children are expected to require moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) treatment, and a further 73,000 will require severe acute malnutrition (SAM) treatment.
- The national and county governments are responding with general food distributions and are urging partners to scale-up relief and livelihood support and activities. The Government has allocated USD 90 million for multi-sector drought response.
- WFP food assistance is reaching around 650,000 people through asset-creation activities for resilience building in 15 arid and semi-arid counties in the form of in-kind and cash-based transfers. In addition, WFP is supporting the Government with the current emergency response by complementing the provision of nutrition commodities in Baringo, Garissa, Turkana and West Pokot counties and by providing technical assistance to the emergency nutrition operation.
- The WFP school feeding programme provides a daily nutritious meal to 500,000 children in eight arid, drought-affected counties. The meals represent an indirect income transfer to

households and they are a powerful incentive for families to continue to invest in education, despite their livelihoods being under drought related stress.

Ethiopia:

- On the back of the worst droughts in decades in 2015/2016, parts of Ethiopia have again been hit by poor rains, with much of Somali, parts of Afar and some lowland areas of Oromia and Southern Nations Nationalities and People's Regions (SNNPR) most affected.
- Water shortages, reduced pastures and livestock deaths continue to be reported in these areas because of late onset, erratic and poor autumn *Hagaya/Deyr* rains. A decline in livestock prices is limiting household income, and combined with reduced access to milk, is likely to cause food insecurity to deteriorate further by May 2017.
- According to the 2017 Humanitarian Requirements Document (HRD), an estimated 5.6 million people require urgent emergency assistance.
- Malnutrition remains a key challenge in addition to health and water and sanitation in most parts of the country, including the refugee camps. According to the 2017 HRD, the Government expects to treat 303,000 severe acute malnutrition and 2.7 million moderate acute malnutrition cases in 2017.
- In the refugee camps, GAM levels among children aged 6-59 months are above the emergency threshold.

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