



WFP East & Central Africa Horn of Africa Drought Crisis Situation Report #03

15 March 2017

Highlights

- WFP has classified the drought crisis in the Horn of Africa as a Level 2 Emergency. Some 2.9 million people in Somalia and 5.6 million people in Ethiopia are categorized as being in either crisis or emergency (Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) levels 3 and 4), and require urgent humanitarian assistance. In Kenya, 2.6 million people also require emergency food assistance, of whom, 2.2 million are in IPC Phase 3.
- The Somalia and Kenya Governments have declared the drought situation a “national disaster” and appeal to the international community to support the response efforts.
- In Somalia, WFP scaled up its emergency response in February, reaching nearly 1 million people through general distributions, nutrition interventions and school meals programme.
- The drought is evolving against a backdrop of escalating needs in South Sudan, with 4.9 million people requiring emergency food assistance between February and April 2017. Of these, 100,000 people in Leer and Mayendit Counties, Unity State are facing famine conditions.
- At both regional and country levels, WFP is working very closely with UNICEF, FAO, OCHA, UNHCR and INGO partners to support common situational analysis. WFP also works closely with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which is playing a key role in advocating for rapid mobilization of resources by Member States and development partners to respond to the impact of drought.

Situation Update

- The effects of drought in the Horn of Africa are expected to intensify, with the approaching April-June (*Gu*) rainfall in Somalia projected to be below normal and the distribution of seasonal March to May rains in Kenya projected to be poor over most parts of the country.
- The food security situation and acute malnutrition in children under five years, pregnant women and nursing mothers are a serious concern in drought-affected areas, especially parts of Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia.
- Severe drought has caused widespread deficits of water and pasture, contributing to declining livestock body conditions, increased rate of disease outbreaks, rising mortalities, and crop production losses.
- Vegetation conditions, as indicated by the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI), remain below average across the region, particularly in southern/central Somalia, southern Ethiopia, and most parts of Kenya.
- Household milk and meat production is extremely low and market prices for cereals have significantly increased owing to regional below-average harvests, resulting in decreased food access. This is likely to push drought-affected households to deploy harmful coping strategies, which may deplete their household assets, further slowing their recovery and limiting their ability to mitigate future shocks.
- The drought has triggered movement of people in search of grazing land, water and work, increasing the risk of tension especially among pastoral and agro-pastoral communities over scarce resources.

Country Profiles

Somalia:

- On 28 February 2017, President Mohammed Abdullahi Farmaajo declared the drought a “national disaster” and appealed to the international community to help raise USD 825 million to prevent the crisis from deteriorating into a famine during the first half of the year.
- The food security situation has deteriorated significantly since September 2016, with an increasing number of people now facing IPC levels 3 (Crisis) and 4 (Emergency). In addition, there are 3.3 million people who are in IPC level 2 (Stressed), who are at risk of slipping into ‘Crisis’.
- Two consecutive below-average rainy seasons have led to near total crop failure, widespread shortage of water and pasture and increased livestock deaths. This coupled with continued increase in local cereal prices and significant decrease in livestock prices is further reducing food availability and access. These conditions have triggered movement of families in the southern regions of Bay, Bakool and Gedo into urban centres in the Gedo region, Mogadishu, and across borders into Ethiopia.
- The approaching April-June (*Gu*) rainfall is projected to be below normal and could contribute to further deterioration in the food security and nutrition situation.
- Nutrition surveys conducted in November and December 2016 indicate that an estimated 363,000 children aged 6-59 months are acutely malnourished, including 71,000 who are severely malnourished.
- WFP’s emergency drought response includes immediate relief assistance through unconditional general food

distribution and cash-based transfers to the most vulnerable people in IPC 3 and 4 in drought-affected areas of Somalia. In addition, WFP provides life-saving curative and preventive nutrition services to children under five years, pregnant women and nursing mothers in the drought-affected areas.

- Due to resourcing constraints, WFP has temporarily suspended food assistance for assets programmes, in order to prioritize relief assistance to households affected by the drought. WFP has prioritized nutrition interventions aimed at treating and preventing moderate acute malnutrition among children under five years, pregnant women and nursing mothers.
- In February, WFP scaled up its drought response, reaching 967,192 people with in-kind and cash-based transfers under the relief, nutrition and school meals programmes. This is more than double the number of people reached in January 2017.
- Insecurity in southern and central Somalia continues to impact humanitarian operations and may impact the delivery of critical assistance to drought-affected households. WFP is airlifting specialized nutritious foods, High Energy Biscuits (HEBs) and other food commodities for immediate relief in hard-to-reach locations in southern Somalia.

Kenya:

- The food security situation has deteriorated significantly, with the number of people facing food insecurity increasing to 2.6 million from 1.3 million, following the below average 2016 short rains season (October – December). Of these, 400,000 people are in IPC level 2 (Stressed).
- The poor short-rains performance is affecting agricultural and livestock production, reducing food availability and increasing market prices in the marginal agricultural areas along the coast, the south east, and the arid pastoral areas in the north.
- The distribution of the 2017 March to May seasonal rains is projected to be poor over most parts of the country, in particular the eastern, coastal, northern and north eastern parts of the country. This could contribute to further deterioration of the food security and nutrition situation.
- The prevalence of moderate acute malnutrition in northern Kenya is extremely critical (above 30 percent) in Mandera County and in parts of Turkana and Marsabit Counties, and critical (15-29 percent) in Isiolo County and parts of Baringo and Turkana Counties. In addition, the nutritional status of pregnant and breastfeeding women has deteriorated across counties. 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 food assistance and are urging partners to scale up relief and livelihood support. The Government has allocated approximately USD 99 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.
- It is estimated that over 2 million school children are adversely affected by the drought, and the Government has highlighted school meals as a priority to mitigate the impact. However, due to funding shortfalls WFP is currently unable to provide school meals in Term 1 (January - April) to 458,000 children from Kenya's most arid counties. The funding shortfall could not come at a worse time, and WFP is appealing for urgent support from donors.
- The Government has requested WFP to resource and procure Ready to Use Supplementary Foods (RUSF) for the period March to May given that the Government stocks should be available in June. WFP has secured part of the required funding and has begun the procurement process. In order to prevent a further deterioration in the nutrition status among the most vulnerable groups, WFP intends to enroll 450,000 children under five years and 100,000 pregnant women and nursing mothers into the blanket supplementary feeding programme for the prevention of moderate acute malnutrition in counties with critical or very critical GAM levels (>20 percent) from May to October 2017.

Ethiopia:

- On the back of one of the worst droughts 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.
- Acute water shortage, poor harvests, reduced pastures, livestock deaths, and decrease in milk production are negatively affecting food security in these regions. In addition, the drought conditions are resulting in increased competition over scarce resources, particularly, water and pasture among communities in the drought affected areas.
- According to the 2017 Humanitarian Requirements Document (HRD), an estimated 5.6 million people require emergency food assistance. Of these, more than 2.03 million people are in the Somali, Oromia and SNNP regions, which are affected by the new drought.
- WFP's emergency drought response includes immediate relief assistance through unconditional in-kind transfers to the most vulnerable people in the drought affected areas. In addition, WFP provides specialized nutritious foods for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition among children under five years, pregnant women and nursing mothers.
- The first round of food distributions for 2017 is ongoing. WFP is providing relief assistance to 1.3 million people, including 50,000 pastoralists displaced by the drought.

- Conflict in the Oromia and Somali regions experienced in February resulted in delays in dispatches and delivery of food commodities in the Somali region.
- Malnutrition remains a key challenge in most of the drought affected regions. In Afar and Somali regions, nutrition screening of children below five years indicates worsening global acute malnutrition (GAM) levels. Afar region has a GAM rate of 13 percent 'serious' while the prevalence of moderate acute malnutrition in Somali region is 16 percent, or 'critical'.
- In the first quarter of 2017, WFP will provide nutrition assistance through its targeted supplementary feeding programme to 198,000 children under five years and 121,000 pregnant women and nursing mothers in Somali, Afar, Oromia (southern parts) and the SNNP regions.
- UNHCR reported a spike in Somali refugee arrivals in Ethiopia, with 4,106 new arrivals recorded since 01 January 2017. In the refugee camps receiving Somali refugees, GAM levels among children aged 6-59 months are above the emergency threshold of 15 percent.



Photo credit: WFP/K. Prinsloo

Credit: WFP/K. Prinsloo

RESOURCING UPDATE

Country	Project	USD 6 months requirements		% funding shortfall
		Total	Net funding requirements	
Somalia	PRRO 200844	381,097,840	289,821,252	76%
Somalia	SO 200924 (UNHAS)	15,220,911	3,000,000	20%
Kenya	PRRO 200736 (Relief)	71,515,233	42,749,488	60%
Kenya	CP 200680 (School Feeding)	10,011,401	3,284,530	33%
Ethiopia*	PRRO 200712 (Relief WFP)	99,597,163	30,414,462	31%
	PRRO 200712 (Relief NDRMC)	49,136,380	28,932,428	59%
	PRRO 200712 (TSF WFP)	9,639,815	1,194,687	12%
	PRRO 200700 (Refugees)	41,980,052	8,646,094	21%

*The relief and refugee requirements have been revised downwards to reflect the needs of the drought-affected population only.

DONORS

We thank the swift and generous support of the following donors: Australia, Canada, CERF, CHF, China, Denmark, ECHO, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Norway, Republic of Korea, Russia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, UN Peace Building Fund and USA.

Contacts

Daniel Christensen
Regional Emergency Advisor
Regional Bureau Nairobi
email: daniel.christensen@wfp.org

Isabel Burchard
Regional Donor Relations Officer
Regional Bureau Nairobi
Email: Isabel.burchard@wfp.org

Challiss McDonough,
Senior Regional Communications Officer
Regional Bureau Nairobi
email: challiss.mcdonough@wfp.org