Djibouti is an arid country of approximately 900,000 people, about 75 percent of whom live in Djibouti city and other towns. Agricultural production is extremely limited, leading to a heavy reliance on food imports. The rural population primarily depends on livestock rearing for food and income. Djibouti hosts more than 30,000 refugees from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Yemen, who primarily reside in refugee camps and settlements.

**SITUATION**

- Djibouti has experienced below-average rainfall since October 2018, leading to poor vegetative conditions in many key livestock grazing areas, including Ali Sabieh Region and parts of Obock and Tadjourah regions. Although recent July–September seasonal rains have helped improve pasture availability in parts of Dikhil, Obock, and Tadjourah regions—leading to improved livestock body conditions, prices, and milk production—forecasts for the upcoming October–February rainy season indicate a likelihood for below-average rainfall and elevated temperatures, which will likely suppress full recovery of grazing lands and limit livestock production, constraining food and income sources for poor households through early 2020, according to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET).

- Food prices remain high in both urban and rural areas, limiting poor households’ purchasing power. Primarily due to prolonged elevated food prices and restricted livestock productivity, FEWS NET indicates that food security outcomes have deteriorated somewhat since last year, and anticipates that many rural households will continue to experience Crisis (IPC 3) or worse acute food insecurity through early 2020, particularly among poor households in Ali Sabieh, Dikhil, and Obock, and among displaced people.

**RESPONSE**

- USAID’s Office of Food for Peace (FFP) provided nearly $7.4 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 funding to the UN World Food Program (WFP) to deliver life-saving food and nutritional support to refugees and drought-affected people in Djibouti. In August, WFP assisted 44,100 people, including through the distribution of more than 300 metric tons (MT) of in-kind food assistance and nearly $190,000 in cash-based assistance. WFP assistance includes monthly in-kind food distributions with a cash transfer component, as well as nutritional support, to 23,000 refugees living in Ali Addeh, Holl Holl, and Markazi camps.

- In FY 2019, FFP provided 50 MT of U.S. in-kind ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF)—with an estimated value of more than $200,000—to partner the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to support the treatment of up to 3,600 children experiencing severe acute malnutrition (SAM). This figure represents half of UNICEF’s anticipated number of SAM cases in Djibouti in 2019.

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**PHOTO:** USAID

**PHOTO:** Relief staff screen a child in Djibouti for acute malnutrition by measuring mid-upper arm circumference.