Situation Overview

The rains that have inundated parts of Somalia are expected to continue in November with moderate to heavy intensity, according to the FAO-Managed Somalia Water and Land Information Management (SWALIM). Heavy rains of more than 100mm are expected in Hiraan, Bay and Bakool regions which are already saturated following weeks of continued heavy rains. Lower Juba and Bari regions may receive little or no rains. So far, Belet Weyne district in Hiraan is the worst affected, with much of Belet Weyne town submerged in water and virtually all residents displaced.

On 4 and 5 November, moderate to heavy rains were experienced in parts of the Juba and Shabelle river basins. Belet Weyne town and Wanle Weyne in Lower Shabelle recorded heavy rains while Nugaal and Mudug areas received light rains. As of 5 November, Bulo Burte in Hiraan Region is only 0.23m away from the bank full level posing an immediate threat of overbank spillage and possible flooding in the next few days.

SWALIM forecasts that high river levels and flooding in Belet Weyne and other areas along the Shabelle basin are likely to be sustained in the next couple of days given the current situation and forecast rains. Despite the continuing risk, the road between Belet Weyne town and Ceel Jaale (the key displacement/evacuation area) and the local airport which were affected have re-opened to traffic. Observed river levels along the Juba continued to drop in the last 24 hours with no risk of flooding.

Humanitarian impact and needs

As of 5 November, 547,000 people have been impacted of whom 370,000 are displaced. In Belet Weyne district, an estimated 45,500 households (273,000 people) have fled their homes. Farmland, infrastructure, and roads have been destroyed in some of the worst-hit areas in Hirshabelle, Jubaland and South West States. At least 17 deaths have been reported.

The UNHCR Protection Return Monitoring Network (PRMN) estimates that floods have also displaced 20,308 people in Middle Shabelle, 7,643 in Bay, 3,227 in Middle Juba, 2,923 in Banadir, and 678 in Bakool region. Humanitarian partners are working with authorities to scale up the response in the affected areas. In Jowhar and Mahaday of Hirshabelle State, authorities and the local community members are trying to mitigate the impact of the floods in residential areas. However, flood risks are still high considering the flow of water to downstream areas of River Shabelle as water levels in Belet Weyne are receding.

In Baardheere district of Gedo region in Jubaland, floods have destroyed close to 250 shelters in Bula Ashraf, Kurtunley, Yaacdo and Amineey villages along the riverbank. Farmland in over 30 villages along the Juba river from Dolow to Gobweyn has been affected by river spillage. Most of these farms are still inundated. Food and WASH supplies are priority needs and there is heightened risk of water/mosquito borne diseases due to stagnant water.

In South West State, an estimated 70,000 people have been affected and another 40,000 displaced by flash flooding across the region. Berdale town (60 km west of Baidoa) is worst affected. Three quarters of the town is submerged. Local authorities and humanitarian partners estimate that 30,000 people have been affected. The road to Berdale is impassable. Other slightly affected towns include Baidoa, Qansax Dheere, Diinsoor, Waajid, Xudur and Buur Hakaba.
Tropical CycloneKayarr that was projected to make landfall, dissipated on 3 November thereby eliminating the risk of cyclonic storms to coastal settlements in Puntland State. As of 4 November, moderate to light rainfall were reported in parts of Bari and Nugaal regions. The rains could possibly relieve prevailing water crisis in some parts of Puntland which has come about because of delayed Deyr seasonal rains. OCHA will continue to monitor the situation.

Humanitarian coordination and response

In addition to the use of re-programmed funds from ongoing Somalia Humanitarian Fund (SHF) and Central Emergency Response Fund projects to address the immediate gaps, the Somalia Inter-Cluster Coordination Group has been working on the strategic prioritization of additional funds that will shortly be released from the SHF reserve to support phases one and two of the flood response.

Assistance to people in need in Belet Weyne is scaling up, in close coordination with relevant authorities. Three helicopters have been allocated for the transportation of humanitarian assistance and personnel. More than 2,440 households are receiving clean water in Belet Weyne district while 5,900 households will benefit from the construction of 708 latrines, 15,000 hygiene kits are to be distributed and 17,000 households are being targeted in an ongoing hygiene promotion/campaign.

A helicopter carrying urgent humanitarian assistance to flood victims in Bay region arrived at the affected locations on 3 November. The helicopter is being used to deploy humanitarian staff to inaccessible areas and to airlift almost 100 metric tons of relief items including WASH, health, shelter, food, and nutrition supplies to Bay and Bakool regions.

Partners and state authorities are holding regular meetings to monitor and plan for the response to the emerging situation in South West State. Health cluster partners have sent additional medical supplies to Berdale for the next three months. Eleven nurses and two doctors are in Berdale to establish a temporary hospital to meet medical needs of affected people.

WASH cluster partners are providing 50 metric tonnes of supplies for 50,000 people in South West State. Partners are sending emergency shelter and non-food items (NFI) kits for 7,000 affected households. Food rations for a month for 30,000 people are to be distributed.

To strengthen inter-agency collaboration on addressing humanitarian needs in Belet Weyne district, OCHA is facilitating the regional flood task force that consists of Hirshehabe state officials, representatives of the inter-ministerial committee set up by the Prime Minister and humanitarian partners.

While assistance has been expanded, Clusters report significant gaps with regard to: emergency shelter, non-food items (NFIs), safe drinking water, latrines, rehabilitation of shallow wells, mosquito and vector control, nutrition, mobile health supplies and medicine, dignity kits, solar street lamps, GBV services and child friendly spaces.

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