



## ‘Extremely Worrying’, Severe Drought Grips Most of Somalia as Seasonal Rains Fail a Third Time

*Most parts of the country are now experiencing a severe drought which has already had a devastating impact on rural livelihoods in the south.*

**19 November 2021, Mogadishu** – Somalia is enduring its third consecutive poor rain season since late 2020 according to the latest Drought Bulletin issued by FAO’s Somalia Water and Land Information Management (FAO SWALIM) Unit in Mogadishu yesterday. The southern regions of Somalia are now enduring severe drought while the north-eastern regions of the country are facing a widespread moderate drought. If drought conditions are to worsen as expected in December 2021 and into the first quarter of 2022, it could lead to a similar situation witnessed in 2016/2017, FAO SWALIM said.

The impacts of climate change and variability in Somalia are major causes of the current climatic hazards that the country has faced over the last decade. “Climate change continues to induce recurrent droughts and erratic weather patterns resulting in widespread displacement, hunger, malnutrition and increased poverty. The negative rainfall anomalies, coupled with the outlook of depressed rainfalls in the country in November, indicate that they will not be enough to mitigate the drought conditions we’re witnessing,” said Ugo Leonardi, SWALIM Technical Adviser.

### On the run from hunger as drought grips south, central Somalia



The severe drought conditions come at a time when an estimated 3.5 million Somalis already face acute food insecurity, and the number of severely malnourished children is also on the rise. The drought conditions triggered by failed rains have already destroyed crops and killed livestock. Farmers and herders are forced to walk increasingly long distances in search of pasture and water, and the drought has had a devastating impact on their lives and livelihoods. Some pastoral communities in Juba and Galmaadug regions have already been displaced and are making their way to towns and IDP camps after losing most of their livestock.

In addition, the persistent drought conditions have contributed to rapidly declining household purchasing power. A situation that is worsening as international prices reached a ten year high in October with imported rice prices in northern and central Somalia up by 50 percent and the prices of maize and sorghum up 30-60 percent in southern markets due to low supply.

With current weather forecasts and persistent conflict present in parts of the country, food insecurity is projected to worsen significantly through May 2022, with many families expected to experience increased hunger and erosion of their capacity to cope with these multiple crises.

### Doubling Down on Drought Response Efforts

Without urgent and scaled up support to the communities in these affected regions, the situation will likely deteriorate further in the first half of 2022. The increasing humanitarian needs are coming at the end of an already challenging year. Government, humanitarian and resource partners must step up to meet this latest challenge.

“The impact of the worsening drought on vulnerable rural populations is extremely worrying. Without rapid action by all actors, rural communities will face difficult choices in coming months as they become unable to feed their families,” said FAO Representative Etienne Peterschmitt. “in 2017 we were able to avert a devastating crisis in Somalia as a result of early action at scale thanks to substantial and timely commitments by resource partners. We must not forget these lessons now. It’s time again for the humanitarian community to double down on its response efforts to safeguard lives and livelihoods in Somalia,” he said.

FAO urgently requires USD2.35 million to protect pastoralist assets through livestock treatment for 15 million animals and USD1.8 million to meet the food needs of 12,500 rural households in southern Somalia.

FAO emergency response in Somalia saves lives and livelihoods by providing cash transfers to vulnerable rural households to meet immediate food needs, while providing critically needed supplementary livestock feed, water and treatment to pastoral communities. Additionally, the emergency response provides drought tolerant seed varieties and supplementary irrigation to protect the livelihood of rural farming households.

**Contact**

Name: Will Swanson

Title: Senior Communication Specialist

Office: FAO Somalia

Email: [william.swanson@fao.org](mailto:william.swanson@fao.org)

Phone: (+252) 61 351 7689

Twitter: @FAOSomalia