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## HIGHLIGHTS

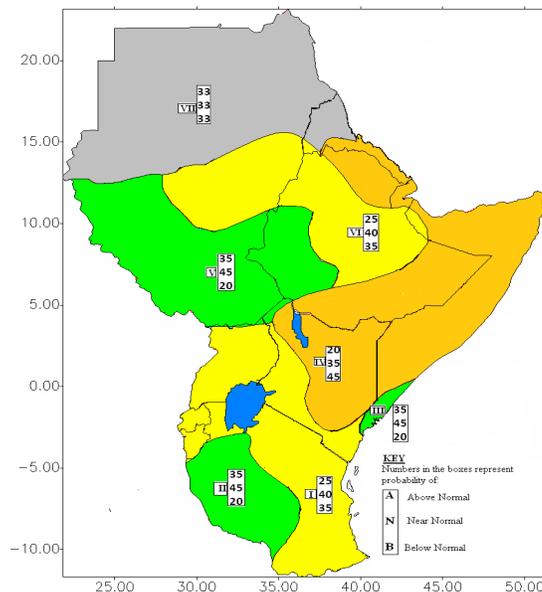
- Slow onset of rains raises concerns across the region
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- Short Rains Assessment in Kenya sees decrease from 3.75 million to 2.2 million in need of food assistance, but gains remain fragile
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- Government of Kenya assures UNHCR it will not force Somali refugees to move back to Somalia
- Kenya Defence Forces begin move to join AMISOM
- Al Shabaab bans Save the Children from areas under their control

## Regional Overview

A slow start of the current rainfall season is being seen in eastern Africa, according to the FEWS NET/Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook. Since the beginning of February, suppressed rainfall has resulted in growing seasonal deficits across South Sudan, much of Ethiopia and Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi, and portions of Somalia. In Ethiopia, the delay in the onset of the season has already affected sweet potato crops in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region (SNNPR) and limited land preparation and planting in the *Belg* cropping areas of the north-east.

A further delay in rainfall could significantly reduce crop yields. For the next week, however, heavy rainfall is forecast to arrive across central Ethiopia, while light rainfall is expected over South Sudan, southern Uganda, southern and central Kenya, and northern Tanzania. In Ethiopia, the forecast heavy rainfall should help to reduce moisture deficits and aid cropping activities in the region (see more under Ethiopia, below).

According to the Greater Horn of Africa Consensus Climate Outlook for the March to May 2012, near normal to below normal rainfall is expected over southern, eastern and northern Tanzania, Burundi; Rwanda; Uganda as well as western and southern Kenya (Zone I – see graphic on right). Meanwhile, there is an increased likelihood of normal to above normal rainfall over much western Tanzania (Zone II); an increased likelihood of near normal to above normal rainfall over the southern coast of Somalia and northern coast of Kenya (Zone III); an increased likelihood of below to near normal rainfall over much of eastern and northern Kenya; southern, eastern and northeastern Ethiopia; Somalia and Djibouti (Zone IV); an increased likelihood of normal to above normal rainfall over South Sudan; south-western Sudan and southwestern Ethiopia (Zone V); and near normal to below normal rainfall is anticipated over south-eastern Sudan as well as north-western and central Ethiopia (Zone VI).



In its Horn of Africa Urgent Needs 90-day Plan for March-June, FAO reports that the situation in the drought-affected areas of the region has improved significantly, although some nine million people remain in need of assistance. Livestock body conditions

***In Somalia, Mogadishu, Bossaso and Berbera Ports are currently not congested, and all operations are reported to be running smoothly***

***WFP introduces “Supercereal Plus” for treatment of moderate acute malnutrition in children under age 5***

***In Djibouti, a country of 775,000 people, the number of rural, urban and refugee households already facing food insecurity stands at 206,000 people***

remain good despite the rapid deterioration of vegetation conditions due to abnormally dry and very hot conditions in the pastoral areas of north and north-eastern Kenya, southern Ethiopia and southern Somalia. In Somalia, the current estimation by the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit of people in need of humanitarian assistance is 2.51 million from February to June 2012. However, if the *Gu* rains are below average as predicted, additional populations are likely to fall into crisis, mainly among agropastoralists and pastoralists. There is an urgent need to scale up resilience activities in the coming months to prevent people from losing livelihoods and productive assets and the gains from the recent *Deyr* harvest. In Kenya, according to the just concluded Short Rains Assessment (see more under Kenya, below), most parts of the country are in Stressed food security phase (IPC Phase 2) with only small pockets facing Crisis food security (IPC Phase 3).

On the logistical front, there are positive developments coming from the region's ports, with the Global Logistics Cluster reporting that Djibouti Port's bulk terminal is mildly congested, with current waiting time averaging one week. This is expected to continue as more bulk cargo vessels are due at the port. In Tanzania, Dar Es Salaam Port's container terminal remains congested, while in Kenya, Mombasa Port is finally experiencing a slight decrease in congestion, with an average waiting time of six days. In Somalia, Mogadishu, Bossaso and Berbera Ports are currently not congested, and all operations are reported to be running smoothly.

## Djibouti

### Health, Nutrition and Food Updates

On the health front, UNICEF reports that with the total number of measles cases having reached 92 from all age groups in the country since January, a national vaccination campaign targeting 95,225 children from 9 months to 5 years old was launched on 15 March. A catch-up vaccination for outbreak sites and areas with low vaccination coverage will follow. With regard to nutrition, during its most recent reporting period (1-14 March), UNICEF reports that the total number of new cases of malnutrition is 217 compared to 271 for the previous reporting period. The number of severe and moderate malnutrition cases is 101 and 116, respectively. In addition, four severely malnourished children died during this period. For its part, WFP is introducing a new nutrition product, “Supercereal Plus”, for treatment of moderate acute malnutrition in children under age 5, comprised of wheat and dehulled soya beans, sugar, dried skim milk, refined soya bean oil, vitamins and minerals, a 200-gram daily ration provides 840 Kcal, 32 grams of proteins and 18 grams of fat. Training of health staff in its administration in supplementary feeding programmes is ongoing.

### Bleak outlook for March-April-May rains

A new report from the Early Warning Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture of Djibouti cautions that food security for the coming six months will be largely influenced by the performance of the March-April-May rains, which normally contribute from 20 to 30 per cent of annual rainfall for the country. The rains will be particularly important for pastoral communities, as weak rains will not enable the sufficient regeneration of pasturage and water reserves. Unfortunately, the current outlook for the performance of these rains is rather bleak. Humanitarian actors are being encouraged to take preemptive active to mitigate the dire consequences that could result, as the number of households (rural, urban and refugee) already facing food insecurity stands at 206,000 people (34,334 households). UNICEF and WFP are considering expanding coverage of their support to therapeutic and supplemental feeding programmes. For its part, the Ministry of Agriculture foresees undertaking measures such as feed and medicinal distributions for livestock; distribution of small (goats) and large (camels) livestock to pastoralists who have suffered major animal losses; improved surface water exploitation and irrigation infrastructure; and access to credit for herders, farmers and fishermen.

## Ethiopia

### Potential deterioration of food security in multiple regions

There is growing concern over the potential deterioration in food security in *belg*-producing parts of central and southern Ethiopia (eastern Tigray and Amhara, central and eastern Oromia and SNNP regions) in the coming months. This is due to the delayed onset of the mid-February to May rains, which are now up to six weeks late. In Amhara, recent estimates indicate that only three per cent of planned cropland had been planted as of 16 March. Normally, most *belg* crops in Tigray, Amhara and central and eastern Oromia should have been planted by the end of February. Coupled with crop infestation (the extended dry season creates favorable conditions for crop pests) and the erratic and below-average rainfall forecast for the remainder of the season is likely to lead to a reduction in *belg* production. *Belg* production, accounts for 5 to 30 per cent of annual production in northern *belg*-cropping areas, and for 30 to 60 per cent or more of production in the southern *belg*-cropping areas.

Meanwhile, the price of cereals has increased and could climb further with the approaching lean season in *belg*-dependent areas. Ethiopia's year-on-year inflation rate rose to 36.3 per cent in February, up from 32 per cent the previous month. The high rate of inflation is likely to continue to affect the purchasing power of the most vulnerable households. Prices of livestock and livestock products dropped from December 2011 to January 2012. Comparatively, however, livestock prices remain relatively strong for this time of year, resulting in favourable terms of trade for pastoralists.

### Food relief update

Relief food dispatched under the first round (2012) reached 37 per cent as of 15 March. Meanwhile, dispatch of the ninth round (2011) relief food assistance to 1.4 million people in the Somali Region is nearing completion with 97 per cent of allocated food dispatched. On 16 March, the Disaster Risk Management & Food Security Sector (DRMFSS) and WFP began distribution of a third round of relief food for the Kenyans displaced in the Moyale *woredas* of Ethiopia's Oromia and Somali Regions.

### Meningitis and measles dominate health sector response

Suspected cases of meningococcal meningitis continue to be reported from Kembata Tembaro and Wolayita zones of SNNPR. The situation is under strict monitoring and follow-up. A US\$3.1 million Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan (EPRP) has been prepared for response to potential meningitis outbreaks throughout the country, especially in at-risk areas along the meningitis belt. New suspected cases of measles were reported during the past two weeks from in Oromia, SNNP and Tigray Regions. Regional Health Bureaus are working to contain the disease through enhanced routine immunization, strengthened case management and surveillance. Additionally, a polio and measles vaccination campaign targeting the displaced Kenyans concluded in the past week, with 1,087 children (out of 4,381 targeted children) between the ages of 6 months and 14 years and 550 children (out of 4,966 targeted) under five years of age vaccinated for measles and polio respectively.

### Refugee response continues on two fronts

As of 17 March, 147,661 refugees from Somalia were hosted in the five Dollo Ado refugee camps and the transit centre (53 per cent female). Preliminary results of a recently concluded multi-agency nutrition survey suggest that the nutrition situation of the refugees in Bokolomanyo camp is at an acceptable level (global acute malnutrition rate at less than 10 per cent). The survey is ongoing in Melkadida and Buramino refugee camps. The last nutrition survey conducted in these camps was in October 2011.

In western Ethiopia, 30,606 refugees (45 per cent female), mostly from Sudan's Blue Nile State, were registered by UNHCR in Beneshangul Gumuz Region as of 17 March.

**Livestock prices remain relatively strong for this time of year, resulting in favourable terms of trade for pastoralists**

**Suspected cases of meningococcal meningitis continue to be reported from Kembata Tembaro and Wolayita zones of SNNPR; the situation is under strict monitoring and follow-up**

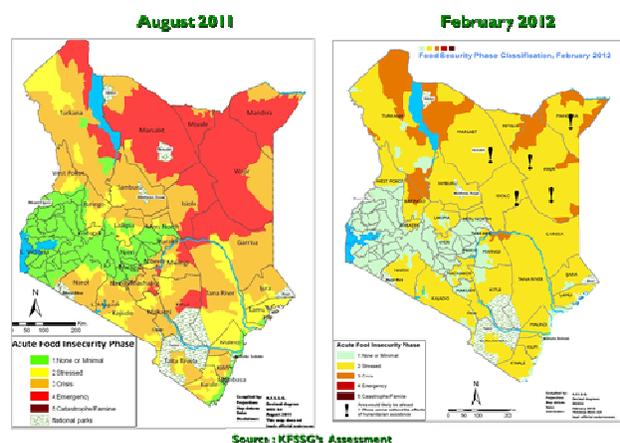
Of these, 371 new arrivals were registered over the past two weeks. Meanwhile, up to 15,000 people from the South Sudan Lou Nuer community crossed into Ethiopia's Gambella Region since mid-February 2012. As of 13 March, the government refugee agency, ARRA, and UNHCR had relocated 1,300 individuals verified as refugees from the temporary settlement near the border town of Matar to Fugnido camp in Gambella Region. Provision of food assistance and distribution of NFIs is underway with support from ARRA/WFP and UNHCR respectively. Work to extend food assistance to cover the already-vulnerable host community and preparation for possible additional influxes of refugees is also ongoing.

## Kenya

### Short Rains Assessment finds 2.2 million in need of food assistance

According to the Short Rains Assessment (SRA) findings released on 15 March, some 2.2 million people in Kenya are in need of food assistance, down from 3.75 million following above-average precipitation. Conducted in 29 counties, the SRA found that rainfall performance was above average in the Arid and Semi-arid Lands, although the season ended earlier than anticipated. Livestock body condition in all counties was found to be good, but could deteriorate quickly. Households were found to have insufficient food stocks due to poor crop performance. Food shortages are expected in the next two to three months, coupled with increasing food prices. Risk of malnutrition has reduced, except in parts of Wajir, Mandera, Moyale and Marsabit.

#### Food Security Phase Classification



*Food shortages are expected in Kenya in the next two to three months, coupled with rising food prices*

*Should the Long Rains forecast hold, recent gains in the fragile pastoral livelihood zones in the north-east could be reversed*

### Long Rains to vary from normal to below normal

The Kenya Meteorological Department released the upcoming long rains (March to May) season forecast. Above normal rains are forecast for the western highlands, Lamu, Ijara and south Garissa; highly depressed rains are anticipated in the north-east, Moyale, Mandera, Wajir, northern Garissa, eastern Marsabit and northern Garissa; other areas are projected to receive slightly depressed rains. Should this forecast hold, the gains made recently in the already fragile pastoral livelihood zones in the north-east could be reversed. Meanwhile, in Keiyo North, residents have been warned of possible mudslides and advised to move to safer grounds by the Kenya Red Cross.

### IEBC sets 4 March 2013 as date for general elections

The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) has announced that the general elections will be held on 4 March 2013, as provided for in a January Constitutional Court ruling. Parents and teachers' representatives rejected the date on the grounds that campaigns and subsequent elections fall in the middle of a learning term and would thus significantly affect learning. This is significant in that 88 per cent of primary schools nationwide are used as polling stations, and would remain closed during elections.

***In Isiolo, there is no means for communities to report and receive information when security personnel are absent, and the availability of sufficient numbers of police personnel is a major challenge***

***In Moyale, Ethiopia, more than 29,000 people from Moyale, Kenya were registered, and the Kenya Red Cross estimates that a similar number of people could be displaced inside Kenya***

## **Inter-communal conflict continues in Isiolo**

From 14-15 March, UNICEF and OCHA conducted a joint mission to Isiolo, central Kenya, to gauge the current situation and the ongoing humanitarian response to inter-communal conflict in the area. Tensions have primarily involved the Borana and Somalia communities on one side, and the Turkana community on the other, but have also seen the involvement of other communities. More than 40 people have been killed this year, and several thousand displaced. The most recent wave of violence, which began on 26 February and which left at least six people dead primarily affected the area of Shambani, from where an estimated 200 households have been displaced and about 80 per cent of homes had been torched.

Humanitarian response in terms of non-food items was found to be sufficient for the time being, but could require additional support in the future. Some gaps in terms of water and sanitation were reported, and outbreaks of violence have disrupted access to health facilities and schools. Ongoing assessments are expected to provide greater details of unmet needs shortly.

Among the underlying causes and contributing factors cited for the violence are upcoming elections and competition for representation in national and local governance; the designation of Isiolo as a resort city and the expectation that communities and individuals occupying the proposed land will receive compensation; availability of guns and indiscriminate arming of local groups; and rumours and manipulation. While much of the displacement is temporary, in many cases communities are reluctant to return to their homes fearing further attacks. Partners report that in some instances even when additional security is provided, it is not always consistent or sustained. There currently exists no means for communities to report and receive information when security personnel are absent, and the availability of sufficient numbers of police personnel is a major challenge. While local peace building efforts are key, broader action at the national level is also necessary. Clarity on the processes of devolution and on the implementation of Vision 2030 were highlighted by various stakeholders.

## **IOM evaluates impact of recent conflict in Moyale**

Earlier this month, an IOM team visited Moyale district in north-eastern Kenya to assess the impact of conflict in the region. Primary among its findings were a need to greatly increase peace-building efforts and provision of security; to provide psychosocial and trauma counselling; and to begin reconstruction of shelters for those hardest hit by violence.

Inter-communal fighting between Borana and Gabra clans erupted in October 2011 and escalated in January 2012. Several waves of fighting resulted in over 40 deaths, hundreds of houses burned, and institutions vandalized. According to local authorities across the border in Moyale, Ethiopia, more than 29,000 people from Moyale, Kenya were registered, and the Kenya Red Cross estimates that a similar number of people could be displaced inside Kenya. The displacement has caused disruption of cross-border trade, which is a vital income source for many locals. A high mobility of persons crossing back-and-forth between Ethiopia and Kenya to monitor the security situation was noted, and fear of retaliatory attacks persists.

## **Wildfires raise fears of increased conflict among pastoralist communities**

Wildfires have destroyed at least 20,000 hectares of grassland in northern Kenya, giving rise to fears of conflict between pastoralist communities amid an already serious food security crisis. The Kenya Forest Service warned of more fire outbreaks due to prolonged dry weather, endangering the country's water towers. More than 80 square kilometres of grassland in the moorland section of the Mt Kenya forest were consumed by raging fires while a similar fire broke out in the Aberdares forest. Mt Kenya is the main water tower serving Nairobi with over 80 per cent of its water, and supports immense hydropower generation and agriculture. Conservationists are also wary of the

grievous harm to the environment such destruction will cause, while residents living downstream of the rivers flowing from Mt. Kenya have expressed concerns over destruction to ecosystems as rivers start drying up.

### Food distributions reach 80 per cent of targeted beneficiaries in February

In February under the drought operation, WFP reached 80 per cent of targeted beneficiaries with 89 per cent of the food through general food distributions and food-for-assets. However, due to operational constraints and cash pipeline issues, just forty-two per cent of cash planned for conditional and unconditional cash transfers was received by 47 per cent of beneficiaries. About 91 per cent of planned children aged 6 to 59 months and pregnant and breastfeeding women received supplementary rations through the blanket supplementary feeding programme. The final blanket supplementary food distribution will be completed in March in Wajir, Mandera, Marsabit, Samburu and Turkana.

### WFP unveils three-year operation to respond to drought emergencies

WFP's Executive Board has approved a new three-year operation to respond to drought-emergencies and build communities' resilience to climatic shocks. The new operation will start in May 2012, when the current project comes to an end, and will support government's social protection strategy and commitment to end drought emergencies through sustainable solutions.

### Dadaab: GoK assures UNHCR that refugees will not be forced to move

Despite widespread media reports and several Government of Kenya statements to the contrary, the UN Refugee Agency says that national authorities has provided assurances that Somali refugees residing in the Dadaab refugee complex will not be forced to move back to areas of Somalia that the Kenya Defence Forces have reportedly secured. At present, UNHCR does not consider conditions in Somalia to be conducive for any massive return of refugees, and does not wish to see refugees returned to a situation of internal displacement in their homeland, as it is not a durable solution.

As of 18 March, the overall population in the Dadaab camps stood at 462,666 persons. Pursuant to the Government's directive to discontinue registration, UNHCR will capture the data of new arrivals and provide them with kitchen sets, blankets, plastic mats, and jerrycans.

## SOMALIA

### Situation overview

The humanitarian community is concerned that increasing conflict could lead to further displacement of internally displaced people (IDPs) from the Afgooye corridor into Mogadishu and the surrounding areas, straining facilities in the capital where the number of IDPs is currently estimated at 184,000.

The onset of the *Gu* rains, expected shortly, brings further urgency for improved shelter, water and sanitation conditions in IDP camps to minimize the risk of cholera and acute watery diarrhoea.

Field and media reports indicate that 5,000 people were displaced within the Gedo region following clashes between Ethiopian and Kenyan forces against Al Shabaab. The ongoing conflict also resulted in the closure of more than 10 health centres in the region. UNHCR estimates 77,000 IDPs live in Gedo.

The Kenyan Defence Forces ended Operation Linda Nchi on 17 March and announced the beginning of operations under AMISOM. Kenya will take 16 of the 85 agreed

**Three-year operation to respond to drought emergencies and build communities' resilience to climatic shocks approved by WFP**

**As of 18 March, the overall population in the Dadaab camps stood at 462,666 persons**

**Coming rains raise urgency for improved shelter, water and sanitation conditions in IDP camps to minimize risk of cholera and AWD**

**On 13 March, Al Shabaab banned Save the Children from operating in areas under their control**

positions in the military council of AMISOM, based in Mogadishu. The AMISOM force comprises 12,031 Ugandan and Burundi soldiers, 4,660 Kenyans, 1,000 from Djibouti and 850 from Sierra Leone.

On 13 March Al Shabaab banned Save the Children from operating in areas under their control, accusing them of distributing expired food, corruption and failure to comply with regulations. The ban on Save the Children will further limit access to humanitarian assistance for the community.

### Assistance overview

**NFIs:** 10,002 emergency assistance packages were distributed to 60,012 IDPs in the Hodan and Daynile districts of Mogadishu and in Lower Juba region by the Shelter Cluster in direct response to the influx from the Afgooye corridor and evictions from public buildings in the capital. In Lower Juba, 24,000 people benefitted from distribution of 4,000 emergency assistance packages, funded through the Common Humanitarian Fund.

**Food:** In Mogadishu, the cluster scaled up response with cooked meals and targeted supplementary feeding programmes, reaching 460,311 people. Cluster partners' are working on a one-time relief ration comprising of 300 tons of high-energy biscuits. Cluster members released 5,000 tons of red sorghum into the market in Mogadishu through a network of national suppliers as part of a market stabilization programme; reports indicate the sorghum (through trading networks) ended up in deficit areas, including Galgaduud region.

**Agriculture and Livelihoods:** The cluster disbursed cash relief assistance to 37,935 households (approximately 200,000 people) in Wadajir, Hodan, Boondheere, Waaberi, Xamar-Jajab and Dharkenley in Mogadishu. Food vouchers will soon be distributed to 4,457 households in Siigaale of Zone K area. Meanwhile, 1,000 households along the Banadir coastline benefited from fishing equipment.

**Nutrition:** Cluster partners have supported approximately 74,659 malnourished children under age 5 (32,077 severely malnourished and 42,582 moderately malnourished) throughout Somalia since January. The cluster is targeting 194,000 children under age 5 years of age with treatment in the coming 6 months, of whom 56,000 children are severely malnourished and 138,000 are moderately malnourished. The cluster estimates an average of 32,000 children will be reached (9,000 severely malnourished children and 23,000 moderately malnourished children) monthly for the next 6 months, with the majority being in the southern regions.

**WASH:** The cluster established a Hygiene Promotion/Sanitation Technical Working Group to oversee activities in Mogadishu. At present, the cluster is supporting 327,154 people (13 per cent of the 2.6 million people targeted) with sustainable water access across Somalia. Concurrently, the cluster is reaching 803,188 beneficiaries, 789,588 of whom are from the south, with temporary provision of safe water. Another 197,889 beneficiaries can now access latrines, and 154,430 people have benefited from hygiene promotion and NFI hygiene packages.

**Health:** The cluster foresees malaria increasing with the onset of rains, affecting mostly the riverine areas of the Shabelles, the Jubas, Gedo, Hiraan and Banadir regions. Rapid diagnostic tests and Artemisia combined therapy (malaria drug treatment) are on the ground, according to WHO, as well as interagency health kits with a malaria module to be deployed in the event of an outbreak. Meanwhile, the cluster reported the start of the first round of Child Health Days in Puntland on 11 March, with more than 160,000 children aged 0-59 months targeted with vaccinations against polio, measles, diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus. The children also received Vitamin A supplements and deworming tablets.

**Protection:** The cluster is piloting an innovative family tracing programme whereby family tracing and reunification officers are equipped with laptop and wireless area

**Health partners foresee malaria increasing with the onset of rains, affecting mostly the riverine areas of the Shabelles, the Jubas, Gedo, Hiraan and Banadir regions**

**Conflict and widespread displacement in the Afgooye corridor contributed to lower enrolments for February and March when 16 schools were closed or relocated**

**An updated Horn of Africa funding table and detailed reports by country are available at <http://fts.unocha.org>**

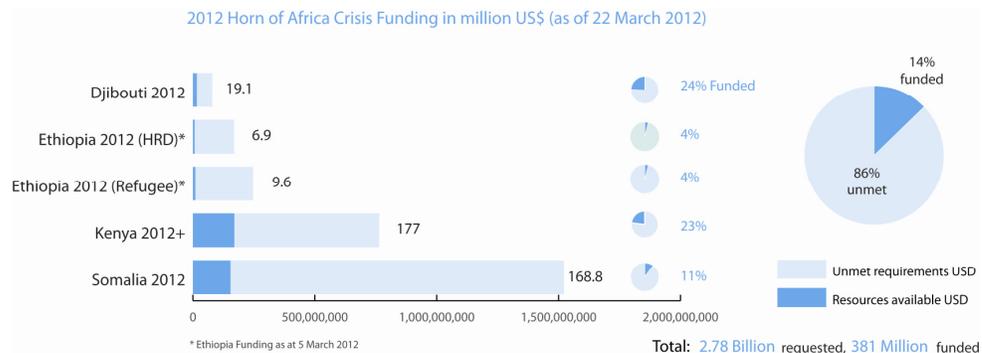
**All humanitarian partners, including donors and recipient agencies, are encouraged to inform FTS of cash and in-kind contributions by sending an e-mail to [fts@un.org](mailto:fts@un.org)**

protection-enabled mobile phones to ensure direct registration and follow up in IDP settlements. The cluster is also rolling out a 10-week training-of-trainers on mine risk education targeting 385 staff at Child Friendly Spaces and community mobilizers in Banadir and Gaalkacyo in Mudug region.

**Education:** The overall number of children reached through education interventions decreased from 570,879 to 569,148 in the southern regions. Conflict and widespread displacement in the Afgooye corridor contributed to lower enrolments for February and March when 16 schools were closed or relocated. Five temporary learning spaces were established in Tarbuka and Zone K, four in Radarka and on a site north of the former military academy.

**For further information on the humanitarian response in Somalia, please refer to OCHA-Somalia Humanitarian Bulletin, Issue 3, dated 21 March, available online at [ochaonline.un.org/somalia/](http://ochaonline.un.org/somalia/)**

## Funding



**NB:** In addition to the resources presented above, which show funding against the net requirements appealed for in the 2012 Humanitarian Requirements Document, Ethiopia's total funding for 2012 includes some \$76.9 million in food aid contributed in 2011 for 2012 and counted as carry-over against the gross funding requirements originally identified in the 2012 HRD, as well as a further \$117.5 million in other food and non-food funding carried over from 2011 to 2012.

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