Drought in the Horn of Africa has left about 11.7 million people severely food insecure (IPC Phase 3 and above) and over 785,000 children severely malnourished in Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya and Uganda. This number is expected to rise in the months ahead as a result of consecutive poor seasons that have destroyed livelihoods and eroded the ability of communities to cope. Rainfall between March and mid-May 2019 was less than 50 per cent of the annual average across the Horn of Africa and, although rains in certain areas have improved in the second half of the Gu/long rains, they are not expected to be sufficient to offset the early shortfalls. This marks the second successive poor rainy season in the Horn of Africa, following below-average October to December 2018 Deyr/short rains. Many of the areas impacted by drought across the region have also been affected by internal violence and conflict, and escalating food insecurity is likely to further heighten protection risks, especially for women and girls, who will be forced to travel longer distances to reach clean water and food. Drought also exacerbates the risk of infectious diseases such as cholera, typhoid fever, diarrhoea, acute respiratory infections and measles.