HIGHLIGHTS

- Gu’ harvest expected to be 50 per cent below average
- Funding gaps threaten nutrition response
- Stronger institutions can make a difference
- Access remains a critical challenge
- Interview with the Director General of the Jubaland State Ministry of Planning & International Cooperation
- Limited funding hinders effective response
- SHF releases $7.6 million to respond to drought

FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of food insecure people</td>
<td>5.4m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of people in emergency and crisis (IPC Phases 3 &amp; 4)</td>
<td>2.2m</td>
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<tr>
<td># of people in stress (IPC Phase 2)</td>
<td>3.2m</td>
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<tr>
<td># of children projected to be malnourished</td>
<td>1.2m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of internally displaced persons</td>
<td>2.6m</td>
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FUNDING

$1.08 BILLION requested for the 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan

$410 MILLION Funding received for the 2019 HRP

Gu’ harvest expected to be 50 per cent below-average

Somalia is experiencing the negative impact of erratic and abnormally performing Gu’ rains (April – June) which followed a poor 2018 Deyr season (Oct-Dec), and unusually dry conditions during the 2019 Jilaal season (Jan-Mar). This has compounded the limited recovery from the severe drought of 2016/17. The effects of the poor Gu’ are expected to persist until late 2019.

The just ended rainy season started late throughout the country and in most areas resulted in cumulative below-average rainfall. In some parts of the country, heavy rains received over a short period resulted in flooding and significant damage to planted crops, pasture and other resources critical for agriculture and livestock production.

According to the FAO-managed Food and Nutritional Analysis Unit (FSNAU), while the late rains eased drought conditions in some places, which improved water availability and supported the livestock sector to a certain extent, they will not be sufficient for sustainable agricultural production.

The rains generated pasture growth, albeit late, improving livestock body conditions and some animals, mainly sheep and goats, are conceiving. Some catchments have replenished and water prices declined in parts of the country. However, pasture availability and livestock body conditions remain below average in parts of Hawd of Togdheer and Addun as well as Coastal Deehin the northeast areas. In southern areas, the benefits of the rains to livestock will not be realized before early October, when current livestock conceptions lead to herd size increases. Impoverished pastoralists, particularly those in the northern and central regions, whose livestock herds were depleted due to the impact of the 2016/17 severe drought, have accumulated substantial debts since the beginning of the year and will face large food consumption gaps, expected to result in heightened acute malnutrition and excess mortality risk through October.
In crop growing areas, the delay in the Gu’ rains has significantly affected planting and germination. As a result, the season’s cereal harvest is projected to be 50 per cent below average. Due to exhausted food stocks, reduced income from agricultural labour and below average harvest prospects, poor agro-pastoral families and farmers in most parts of the country are expected to face food consumption gaps until late 2019. Some 2.2 million people, an increase of almost 30 per cent compared to the projection of February, are estimated to face acute food insecurity through September and are urgently in need of food assistance and interventions to prevent high levels of acute malnutrition, according to FSNAU. This number could increase as the dry season progresses.

Response continues but not at the required scale due to limited resources. In May, over 1.2 million people received food assistance and 510,000 people were reached with seasonal inputs or livestock assets protection, while 450,000 people received cash assistance. More than 631,500 people were assisted with access to water, 26,100 children with nutrition services and 606,000 medical consultations have been conducted since the beginning of the year. A cholera vaccination campaign was implemented in areas reporting elevated numbers of AWD/cholera.

Funding gaps threaten nutrition response

Recurrent climatic shocks and conflict continue to diminish the resilience of many families, consequently depleting livelihood and coping mechanisms. As a result, emergency levels of acute malnutrition affecting children and women are widespread. The abnormal and erratic Gu’ rains have compounded the problem.

According to FAO-FSNAU, areas of particular concern and likely deteriorations are in the Guban pastoral, Northwest agro-pastoral, Addune pastoral, Bay agro-pastoral and Lower and Middle Shabelle, Hiraan regions as well as Internally displaced persons (IDPs) and poor urban households. To date, Nutrition Cluster partners have admitted 99,438 Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) cases and 168,209 Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) cases. This is partly caused by increasing disease incidence, mainly malaria, diarrhoea, respiratory and influenza like illness, which are on the rise among children. Households impacted by the drought can expect a sharp rise in acute malnutrition if water, hygiene and sanitation conditions do not improve.

Preventive services to curb this trend must be scaled up. These include infant and young child feeding-counselling, supplementary feeding programmes, and maternal and child health nutrition. Nutrition services have so far reached almost 915,000 women and 332,000 children. However, due to funding constraints, coverage has reduced compared to previous years. Continuity and scale up of services is vital to reduce the nutrient gap and mitigate preventable suffering.
Stronger institutions can make a difference: UNDP

The frequency of the shocks caused by climate change is increasing and is compounding the existing vulnerabilities. The cycles of drought and flooding are coming at ever shorter intervals and continue to devastate community livelihoods before they recover from the previous shocks. This is increasing the urgency of sustained development to enable communities to weather future crises.

A scaled-up response by the Government together with humanitarian and development agencies averted famine in 2017. Such response was made easier by a focus on strengthening household level resilience achieved in previous years with the support of the UN and international partners. Since then, Somalia has moved forward in rebuilding government and security institutions decimated by civil war and has had a peaceful transition of power following the electoral process in 2016. New Federal Member States (FMS) are helping to support delivery of services and effective governance at state level.

However, if investments are made to recover lost productive capacity in agriculture and livestock, to diversify the economy into different sectors, develop a stable social protection system, and strengthen Somali institutions to predict, prevent and respond to humanitarian crisis, the impact of recurrent climate shocks can be lessened.

In early 2018, a Drought Impact Needs Assessment (DINA) led by the Government and supported by the EU, UN and World Bank, highlighted the importance of aligning humanitarian assistance and medium- and longer-term development assistance. The findings of the DINA informed a Recovery and Resilience Framework (RRF) that sets out priorities for recovery and development for Somalia through a multi-sectoral approach that brings together humanitarian and development responses. It focuses on recovery of lost productive capacity, investment in diversification of the economy, disaster risk management, durable solutions for displacement, climate resilience, and building back better. In line with the RRF and the National Development Plan, UNDP is working together with humanitarian and development partners to support the Government in strengthening key institutions, to ensure disaster preparedness and risk reduction, to support communities to repair and build vital water infrastructure, and to equip communities to adapt to climate change. For example, with Global Environment Facility (GEF) funding, UNDP climate resilience projects worked to give 20,000 households better access to water, as well as to provide training on ecosystems management and sustainably managed rangelands.

To ensure Somalia moves away from recurrent humanitarian emergencies, it is essential that in parallel with urgent delivery of relief, we invest in long term climate responses and disaster management interventions now. By aligning to the ND and the RRF, and delivering humanitarian, development and peace building programmes in a cohesive way, the international community can support Somalia’s trajectory from fragile state to an increasingly resilient and peaceful one, and a Somali led development and recovery path out of crisis.

Access remains a critical challenge

Conflict, insecurity, lack of road access and limited logistical capacity continue to hamper the delivery of aid. In the first half of 2019, 51 humanitarian personnel were directly affected by violent incidents. Of these, two humanitarian workers were killed, two injured, 11 abducted, five arrested or temporarily detained, and two expelled by authorities for alleged infractions. Improvised explosive device attacks in highly-populated areas, particularly in Mogadishu, continue to claim civilian victims, including humanitarians. Humanitarian organizations are experiencing road access challenges in 42 districts across the country. This is despite assurances by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and Federal Member States (FMS), including Galmudug, Jubaland, Hirshabelle, Puntland and
South West States, to open the main supply routes. Sieges by Al Shabaab in some government-held towns in Hirshabelle, Jubaland and South West states have hindered access for humanitarian and commercial supplies. In Bulo Burto, Xudur and Waajid, Al-Shabaab continues to target donkey-cart operators using minor roads and tracks to deliver essential supplies to besieged towns. They often confiscate or destroy the supplies, attack the transporters, killing them and/or levying high fines. As a result, aid agencies are resorting to accessing besieged towns using more expensive air transport. Extortion and other forms of violence are also common at the numerous illegal and legal checkpoints manned by both government-affiliated and non-state armed actors. The Mogadishu-Afgooye-Baidoa, Mogadishu-Balcad-Jowhar and Cadaado-Gaalkacyo roads are the most affected.

Bureaucratic impediments also continue to disrupt humanitarian operations. To date, there have been 13 incidents of administrative impediments reported. These include arbitrary taxation, demand by the authorities to participate in contracting of suppliers and service providers for aid organizations and interference in staff recruitment. There have also been disruptions, delays, arrests, detentions and expulsions of humanitarian workers and suspension of programmes.

The Humanitarian Country Team adopted an Access Strategy in May to provide guidance on how to expand reach and engage with authorities and all parties to the conflict as part of efforts to enhance aid delivery.

Interview with the Jubaland Director General
Mr. Abdiwahid Dakane is the Director General of the Jubaland State Ministry of Planning & International Cooperation.

What is the role of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) in humanitarian affairs? The Ministry is partly responsible for the coordination of humanitarian affairs. We hold quarterly coordination meetings to enable us to share information, identify gaps and address challenges faced by humanitarian partners. We also take into account the views of the affected communities in these discussions.

How is the humanitarian situation in Jubaland? The 2019 Gu’ rains performed well below average in our State and this has affected food production. We are concerned that most areas in the State are increasingly becoming more vulnerable to recurrent climatic shocks such as drought and flooding. In addition, displacement to urban centres persists. We continue to make efforts to provide land to resettle internally displaced people permanently, but we also need the international community to help us address life-saving needs alongside long-term development initiatives.

What are some of the Ministry’s achievements? We have registered all humanitarian and development partners operating in the State. This is critical for effective coordination as it enables us to know who is doing what where. It has helped us to maximize available resources and to link humanitarian action with development programming as well as clusters and partners with their respective line ministries. The 2018-2020 Jubaland strategic plan which was launched in May 2018 is being implemented where resources and access allow.

What do you see as the key challenges? The recurrent climatic shocks continue to drive needs and undermine development efforts. Drought and conflict are compounding the situation. We are seeking durable solutions and ways to strengthen the resilience of communities prone to these shocks.
How is your working relationship with humanitarian partners? We have worked hard to build confidence among our partners. We continue to encourage all partners to work with us and with OCHA. We enjoy a good working relationship with OCHA.

Limited funding hinders effective response

The humanitarian operation in Somalia remains underfunded despite the deterioration in the humanitarian situation. At the end of the first half of the year, $473 million had been received for the Somalia operation with $410 million towards the 2019 Somalia Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and $59 million for activities strategically aligned with, but outside of the Plan. Current humanitarian funding to Somalia is lower than that recorded by mid-2018 when the Somalia operation had already received $711 million. Funding for the food security cluster is below 50 per cent of financial needs. Even more concerning is funding for critical clusters such as health and nutrition that barely tops 10 per cent of their requirements. More funding is urgently required to respond to existing needs and allow for a scale up where the situation is deteriorating.

SHF releases $7.6 million to respond to drought

The Somalia Humanitarian Fund (SHF) has allocated $7.6 million from its Reserve to respond to the impact of drought and other drivers of humanitarian needs in southern and central areas of the country. The interventions funded through this envelope are based on priorities identified through consultations at the federal and state levels by the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) and will focus on immediate life-saving humanitarian response in harder-to-reach and/or under-served areas. Local partners will continue to receive a significant percentage of the funding due to their comparative advantages in reaching such areas. About 35 per cent or $2.7 million of the allocation will support targeted integrated humanitarian activities. The SHF programmes will be complemented by a recently announced CERF rapid response grant of $30 million to further boost on-going life-saving assistance targeting communities most impacted by the late onset of Gu’ rains.