With below average rains experienced across the region, some locations in the Horn of Africa are expected to continue to drive humanitarian needs for the next six months. A weak La Niña will likely persist into the second quarter of 2018, which is historically associated with below average rainfall. According to experts who spoke in the 48th Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum, La Niña could trigger severe hunger and lack of water for both humans and livestock, potentially increase conflict between communities over scarce resources and could increased migrations.

According to FSNAU/FEWSNET, over 2.7 million people in Somalia face crisis or emergency between February and June 2018. The National Disaster Preparedness and Food Authority declared a drought emergency in areas of Somaliland facing acute food crisis. Prior to the declaration, an appeal had been issued for urgent humanitarian assistance for over 600,000 drought affected people in Puntland.

A total of 8.3 million children (Somalia 2.8 million, Kenya 1.8 million and Ethiopia 3.7 million) are in need of humanitarian assistance. 1.2 million children, pregnant and lactating women are projected to suffer from acute malnutrition which has reached emergency levels in some locations with 656,614 children below the age of 5 suffering from Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM).

In Ethiopia, renewed inter-communal fighting between the Oromos and Somalis along the borders of their two states, Oromia and Somali Region that started in August 2017 has displaced an estimated 1.1 million people to date. A flare-up in the fighting in January 2018 is likely to increase the number of displaced people.

Cases of Acute of Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) are expected to increase in the first six months of 2018 in the region. This is due to the prolonged drought that has led to widespread child malnutrition, mass displacement, and a lack of access to clean water and sanitation.

The Governments of Ethiopia and Kenya allocated USD 182 million and KSH 3.8 billion respectively to rehabilitate people affected by drought in their countries. Around the same period, the Government of Japan extended the Emergency Grant Aid of USD 9 million for people affected by drought and conflict in Somalia.
KEY ADVOCACY MESSAGES

Drought crisis has continued to increase the vulnerability and humanitarian needs more so amongst the displaced population across the Horn of Africa. Early and urgent funding is needed for prioritised needs in the first half year of 2018. Donor commitments should be made without delay to prevent any further deterioration of the humanitarian situation.

Massive displacements have promoted serious protection concerns such as wide spread cases of Gender-Based violence and forced evictions amongst IDPs especially in Ethiopia’s Somali region and Somalia. Donors and humanitarian actors should invest in supporting long lasting solutions to protect and promote the rights of displaced persons and their vulnerabilities.

OXFAM DROUGHT RESPONSE INTERVENTION AREAS

Please note the figures per sector have been revised in comparison to the last report to better capture the change in activities in the Horn of Africa.
Oxfam has reached a total of 660,862 people in Turkana, Wajir and Nairobi.

**WASH:** Water supply system maintenance and expansion continued in February with funds secured from OFDA, EHF, GFO, GAC, DEC and ECHO both in Oxfam and local partner intervention areas.

**CASH TRANSFERS:** 12,491 households (HHs) were reached through conditional and unconditional cash transfers in Dooło zone under ECHO fund. 25% of beneficiaries (3,197 HHs) took part in cash for work activities such as environmental cleaning campaigns. Under GFO funds, 1,300 HHs (976 conditional and 324 unconditional) were reached through third-round cash transfers in Jarar Zone. A total of 244 people took part in the cash for work activities.

Oxfam has reached a total of 140,515 people in Sool, Togdheer and Sanaag regions to date.

**WASH:** A total of 6,000 people will benefit from the completed construction of two ponds once the rains arrive in the next month. The construction and connections of 4 water kiosks that started in October 2017 are completed and will benefit 5,230 people.

**HYGIENE PROMOTION AND SANITATION:** Over 4,103 hygiene kits were distributed in Sool, Sanaag and Togdheer regions. Construction of 18, 20 and 84 family latrines in Sanaag, Sool region and Burao camps respectively have been completed. The latrines will cumulatively benefit 1,859 people in their locations.

**PUBLIC HEALTH PROMOTION:** Acute Water Diarrhoea (AWD) has continued to reduce however the high concentration in camps, poor nutrition intake and hygiene infrastructure and practices that are not adopted to the current situation can easily lead to AWD re-occurrence.

**LIVELIHOODS SUPPORT:** The launch of vaccination and treatment of camel diseases for 150,000 heads in Sool and Sanaag will take place in March. The Government ministry of livestock will contribute vaccines and drugs while Oxfam will cover logistics and subsistence of animal health technicians.

**HYGIENE PROMOTION AND COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION:** 16 latrines are under construction in health facilities. These latrines are estimated to benefit 50 people on a daily basis including employees.

**GENDER AND PROTECTION:** The Mobile protection teams began implementing the second cycle of the Ethiopia Humanitarian Fund (EHF) that will take place in 11 IDP sites in the coming months. The teams have finalized the planning stage of activities.

In Turkana, the final Cash transfer of KES 4000 to 3000 households under DEC Phase 2 was completed. Post Distribution Monitoring was conducted from 26th February to 02nd March.

**CHOLERA RESPONSE:** Funding came to an end in February reaching a total of 124,253 people. According to UNICEF, Kenya has reported 817 cholera cases resulting in 10 deaths in 2018.

**HYGIENE PROMOTION:** Oxfam has followed up on the use and maintenance of hand washing facilities since November 2017. The activities included hand washing and jerrican cleaning demonstrations, community meetings and clean ups. The total number of beneficiaries in Wajir is 71,289 and Turkana is 22,330.
FUNDING UPDATES

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THANKFUL TO OXFAM, AISHA NAMED HER BABY OXFAM.

Aisha, a mother of five is one of the cash transfer beneficiaries in Somali Region, Ethiopia. As one of Oxfam’s drought emergency response beneficiaries, Aisha received a cash transfer from Oxfam. She used the money to set up a camel milk business which supplies milk to her family and is a source of income as she also sells it to the local community. She says that her life and her children’s lives have changed for the better because they now eat a balanced diet and they are much healthier and happier.

Aisha is also working as a supervisor at the Oxfam cash transfers, this has boosted her self confidence as well as helped her gain more respect in the community. Thankful for Oxfam’s assistance Aisha named her baby Oxfam. Aisha said, ‘My life has changed completely and it has made me very hopeful for the future’. This is the reason behind Aisha naming her new born baby Oxfam.

CONTACT DETAILS:

Francesco Rigamonti
Drought Response Regional Operational Lead
frigamonti@ght.oxfam.org

Coralie Rey
Drought Response Regional Funding Coordinator
crey1@oxfam.org.uk

Denis Kongere
Drought Response Regional Policy and Campaigns Manager
DKongere@oxfam.org.uk

Georgette Adrianne
Drought Response Regional Communications Officer
GAdrianne@oxfam.org.uk