HIGHLIGHTS

- Priority areas for humanitarian response.
- Humanitarians boost response to contain disease outbreaks.
- IDPs living in fear of eviction
- International community pledges humanitarian aid for Somalia.

FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of people in need</td>
<td>5.4m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of people in humanitarian emergency and crisis</td>
<td>2.7m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of people Emergency (IPC Phase 4)</td>
<td>0.5m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of children projected to be malnourished</td>
<td>1.2m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of people displaced internally by drought since November 2016</td>
<td>1m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of people in protracted internal displacement</td>
<td>1.1m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FUNDING

$1.5 BILLION requested in the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan

$717 MILLION needed to sustain humanitarian response from January – June 2018.

Priority areas for humanitarian response

Humanitarian situation deteriorates as drought worsens.

The State-by-state drought analysis released by OCHA in February, shows that drought continued to contribute to the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the first quarter of 2018. Most areas have experienced at least four successive seasons of below normal rainfall, resulting in water shortages, loss of livestock and crop failure, and leading to widespread acute food insecurity. Download the State-by-state analysis here: https://tinyurl.com/ycgkae4b

This analysis identifies the priority areas for response and provides an overview of the operational presence of humanitarian partners across the country. It notes that areas such as Awdal, Bari, Sanag, Nugal, Sool and Woqooyi Galbeed have experienced four consecutive seasons of below normal rains.

Consequently, of the one million people in the priority areas, more than half are in Emergency (IPC 4). Urgent nutrition support is required as most of these places have critical levels of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) of 15 per cent or higher. Some areas in Galgaduud and Mudug have seen massive displacement of pastoralists to urban and peri-urban areas in search of assistance due to the loss of their livestock. Over half of the population of Galmudug is in need of aid. By the end of 2017, the Gaalkacyo IDP population had the highest malnutrition rates in the country of 21.9 per cent.

A high concentration of extremely vulnerable displaced persons has made the Banadir region one of the priority areas for humanitarians. It hosts more than 700,000 IDPs. Nearly 270,000 displaced people face acute food insecurity (IPC 3 and 4), while most of the IDPs in Mogadishu face critical levels of acute malnutrition (16.1 per cent GAM prevalence). About 154,000 IDPs were forcefully evicted in Mogadishu in 2017.

Baidoa, in Bay region, continues to be one of the areas requiring urgent and sustained humanitarian response. Displaced people continue to arrive, fleeing drought and armed hostilities. In February alone, 12,600 people arrived in Baidoa and the number is expected to grow, according to the UNHCR-led Protection and Return Monitoring Network (PRMN). Malnutrition among the IDPs is at critical levels of 15.1 per cent GAM prevalence. Loss of assets and livelihood opportunities have severely exacerbated their vulnerability, and made...
them largely dependent on aid. Without assistance, they risk sliding into further crisis, undermining the prospects for reintegration and long term recovery.

Enhancing response amid limited resources.

Humanitarians continue to provide life-saving assistance to the people in need, but lack of adequate resources is limiting their reach. In February, nearly two million people had improved access to food and safety nets. This was a seven per cent (150,000 beneficiaries) reduction compared to January. The decrease in food assistance over the past four months is of concern to the humanitarians in Awdal, Lower Shabelle and Woqooyi Galbeed, where acute food insecurity continues to deteriorate. The level of response has not only reduced, but is significantly lower than the monthly target.

Nearly 59,000 people were reached through sustained access to safe water, and another 50,000 had temporary access to safe water. In addition, over 51,000 people received hygiene kits in Banadir, Bay, Hiraan, Lower Juba and Middle Shabelle regions. The target was mainly conflict, drought and AWD/cholera-affected populations. However, humanitarian partners have noted that access to water (34 per cent) and sanitation (20 per cent) in IDP settlements is low, due to lack of funding.

To enable the affected agro-communities to take advantage of the Gu rains (April – June), humanitarians provided seasonal inputs and livestock asset protection assistance to nearly 88,000 beneficiaries in February. Another 73,000 received various conditional assistance such as cash-for-work and food-for-assets, including training farmers on good agricultural practices. Humanitarians are also providing agricultural inputs such as seeds and irrigation support. Interventions for the Gu will be scaled up as the season progresses.

With over 1.2 million people displaced last year, most of whom are living in overcrowded spaces and are likely to be exposed to the rains, Camp Coordination and Camp Management partners have started community engagement and monitoring of service provision in IDP settlements, reaching nearly 488,000 people. Response activities in the settlements include skills training on improving and maintaining the sites.

Humanitarians are however concerned that while the Gu rains are expected to ease the impact of drought, they could also worsen conditions in the overcrowded IDP settlements. Unlike last year when the rains were poor, the projection for average Gu rains this year may result in stagnant water that might trigger outbreaks of waterborne diseases. The IDPs, a majority of whom are women and children, live in poorly constructed shelters, exposing them to inclement weather. As humanitarians prepare for the rainy season, early funding is urgently needed for priority WASH, health and shelter interventions. By the end of March, these clusters were less than one per cent funded amid an increase in AWD/cholera cases.

A boost to containing disease outbreaks

4.7 million children targeted in nationwide measles vaccination.

A nationwide campaign to protect Somali children against the deadly effects of measles has reached nearly 4.7 million of them. The campaign which was carried out by the Ministry of Health at the national and local levels and humanitarian partners, targeted children aged between six months and 10 years.
For south central, the campaign was launched in Mogadishu on 11 March. It targeted 2.7 million people in Banadir, Galmudug, Hirshabelle, Jubaland and South West State. Somaliland began its campaign on 10 March, targeting over a million children in Hargeisa, Borbera, Boroma, Burao, Elafwein, Erigavo, Lasanod and Sheikh districts. A second phase reached Lughaya, Baki, Gebilay, Balligubadle, Odweine, Buhodleh, Ainabo, Hudun, Taleeh and Badhan. Meanwhile, the Puntland drive in January, reached over 933,400 children (93 per cent), out of 1,008,634 targeted in the 29 districts. Vitamin A supplementation was also administered to boost immunity.

Some 3,807 cases of suspected measles have been reported so far in 2018, with the most affected regions being Bay, Banadir and Mudug. Prolonged drought has resulted in widespread child malnutrition, mass displacement and lack of access to clean water and sanitation, creating ideal conditions for infectious disease epidemics. Overall, more than 1.2 million children are projected to be at risk of acute malnutrition this year. These are nine times more likely to die of killer diseases such as measles and AWD and are susceptible to infectious diseases.

In 2017, over 23,000 suspected cases of measles were reported - six times higher than in 2016. Majority of these (83 per cent) were children under age 10. A measles vaccination campaign reached nearly 600,000 children aged between 6 months and 5 years in hotspot areas. Somali health workers were trained on early outbreak detection and response.

**AWD/cholera outbreak spreads in south-central Somalia.**

Since December 2017, some 1,477 cases of AWD/cholera and nine deaths (CFR: 0.6 per cent) have been reported in four regions namely south-central; Banadir, Hiraan, Lower Juba and Middle Shabelle. According to humanitarians, the current outbreak was first reported in Belet Weyne district in Hiraan region in December 2017. By 11 March, some 539 cases and one death had been reported. Nearly 90 per cent of the affected in Belet Weyne are children under age 5.

The outbreak in Banadir region started in January 2018. Ten out of the 15 districts have so far reported AWD/cholera cases. Some 433 cases have been reported. The cases are managed at the Banadir Cholera Treatment Centre (CTC) in Mogadishu. In Lower Juba, a cholera hotspot, an outbreak in Kismayo district started in February, with 229 cases reported. The first cases were reported among IDPs in Farjano settlement. Middle Shabelle region, another cholera hotspot, reported the first case in February. The most affected villages are Hantiwadag, Kumis, Bulo Sheik and Horseed. Some 276 cases have been reported so far. Nearly half of those reported are children below age 5.

**Humanitarian partners boost response.**

Ahead of the Gu season, humanitarian partners continue to boost efforts against AWD/cholera. Treatment facilities have been opened in Banadir, Belet Weyne, Kismayo, and Middle Shabelle to manage AWD/cholera cases from affected districts. The first round of the Oral Cholera Vaccination campaign in Afmadow and Hudur was completed mid-February. A second round was postponed to the end of March after the measles campaign is completed. Another cholera vaccination campaign is planned for Dobley and Hudur. Four regional Rapid Response Teams have been deployed to verify reports in affected
districts/regions. Of the 10 stool samples from Bulo-barde, Hiraan region, six tested positive for Vibrio Cholera, while all the 10 samples collected from Herale in Galgadud region were negative.

WASH cluster partners in Jowhar are carrying out hygiene promotion though radio broadcasts. Partners are also distributing hygiene kits and are trucking water to the six villages affected by cholera in Jowhar. Water chlorination has been conducted in these areas. Plans are underway to carry out training on CTC/CTU guidelines, cholera prevention and response measures, including case tracing for some 40 health workers and WASH managers from 10 hotspot locations in south-central Somalia. An oral cholera vaccination campaign in 11 high-risk districts in 2017, helped reduce the spread of the outbreak.

Internally displaced living in fear of eviction

The 47-year-old Habibo Ali Mohamed, from Weeley Village in Bakol region, arrived at War Isagow settlement for the internally displaced people (IDPs) in Baidoa in April 2017. The settlement hosted nearly 1,000 IDPs who have fled from their rural villages due to drought and conflict in the region.

The mother of six and her family braved the week-long journey to escape conflict and severe drought conditions. The family had lost all their livestock and the situation in the village was desperate. She recalls a distressing journey, with hungry children and their parents and the general despair. In Baidoa, it was not easy to find a place to stay but the War Isagow settlement provided a safe temporary home. They finally settled in a makeshift shelter, where they received some assistance. The situation, however, took a turn for the worse when the landlord evicted the IDP families from the settlement in February this year. They were given only a week to vacate. Habibo recounts being forced to destroy their shelter and leave behind all the WASH facilities and latrines constructed by humanitarians.

With the help of the local authorities and humanitarian partners, the families have now moved to a new settlement. The piece of land is also privately-owned and has a five-year lease. Habibo says that despite reassurances, most families fear another eviction. At the new settlement, they have only received minimal assistance and are in need of urgent aid. Like most other families here, Habibo’s has no desire to return home soon. After all, the circumstances that forced them to flee have not changed.

An escalation in forced evictions continues to undermine efforts to assist IDPs and accelerate their path to recovery and attain durable solutions. Mogadishu, Baidoa and Gaalkacyo are the worst affected. In February alone, some 66,019 people were evicted in Somalia. Overall, 97,490 people have been evicted this year. Notices were issued in 83 per cent of the cases in January and February. However, the notice period was insufficient in most cases as the people affected were only given five days to vacate. Some 63,000 people were reportedly evicted because the landlords wanted to develop their properties, and a little over 7,000 because the owners wanted to increase rent or renovate premises.

Efforts underway to curb evictions

On 29 and 30 December 2017, some 23 IDP settlements housing more than 4,000 households were destroyed. This was during an unannounced destruction of IDP settlements, along with humanitarian infrastructure in K13, Kahda District in Mogadishu. The evictions drew condemnation nationally and internationally. The Banadir Regional Authorities established a rapid response commission to investigate the forced evictions of the IDPs. A report will be presented to the partners once finalized.
During the first National Housing, Land and Property Forum held in March, the authorities committed to work with all partners in finding a lasting solution to the humanitarian and development needs of IDPs and end displacement in Mogadishu, within the next four years. This includes creating the conditions for voluntary returns by strengthening cooperation with Federal Member States, as well as creating conditions for integration. The administration will adopt and observe eviction procedures and set up a rapid response committee on violations affecting IDPs. It also committed to lobby for the ratification of the Kampala convention with partners.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator, in February met with authorities in South West State in Baidoa to discuss the humanitarian situation in the state. The authorities pledged to ensure the safety and security of IDPs, including the protection of those facing unplanned eviction. Humanitarians and the international community continue to call on all parties to protect and assist all the suffering civilians who have fled conflict and drought.

**Donors pledge humanitarian aid to Somalia**

Donors have pledged more than US$350 million for highly targeted famine prevention efforts in Somalia. This is against the target of $717 million needed to sustain the required level of humanitarian response between January and June 2018, to reach 4.7 million people. Some additional new pledges are expected from key donors to boost the response.

At the London conference on Somalia, which was held on 6 March, the international community committed to step up support for the provision of life-saving and life-sustaining interventions across the country. The conference helped to highlight the fragile humanitarian situation very early and draw attention to the need for a swift response. Some 31 Member States, UN Agencies, international organizations and non-governmental organizations attended the meeting, which was convened jointly by the Federal Government of Somalia, the United Kingdom and OCHA.

Timely disbursement of these resources is key to ensuring a sustained response at the same level as the previous year. An estimated 5.4 million people require assistance. Of these, some 2.7 million need urgent life-saving assistance. Over 1.2 million children are projected to be malnourished in 2018. More than 1.2 million people, mostly in the rural areas, were driven from their homes last year by drought and conflict. This brings the total number of the internally displaced persons to nearly 2.2 million and constitute 40 per cent of those in need. A total of US$1.5 billion is needed for the 2018 Somalia HRP. Unless substantive new resources are provided, Somalia’s humanitarian crisis will continue to deepen this year. In 2017, an early and sustained response helped to avert a famine. The international community mobilized a record $1.3 billion for the humanitarian effort.