

HIGHLIGHTS

- More than 1.3 million people are currently food insecure, as 849,000 children face acute malnutrition due to cumulative shocks.
- Desert locusts since January continue to threaten food security in northern Somalia.
- At least 167,000 people are displaced by seasonal floods since September.
- Aid workers scale-up COVID-19 response as Government gradually opens the economy.
- Somalia Humanitarian Fund allocates US\$9 million for flood response



Flooding in Belet Weyne town- photo Warsame/OCHA

KEY FIGURES

5.2M	2.6M	167K	2.1M	849K
People in Need	People Displaced by since March 2020	People Displaced by floods since 1 September	People food insecure through December 2020	Acutely malnourished children as of September 2020

CUMULATIVE SHOCKS AGGRAVATE HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

More than 1.3 million people food insecure and 849,000 children face acute malnutrition

Somalia continues to face a dire humanitarian situation, with an estimated 5.2 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. This is attributed to cumulative shocks, including erratic 2020 Gu season, widespread and severe seasonal flooding, desert locust infestation, socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 and protracted conflict -and flood-related displacement.

According to the 2020 [Post Gu Seasonal Food Security and Nutrition Analysis for September](#) (FAO/FSNAU), an estimated 1.3 million people are facing Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or higher) outcomes through September 2020, even in the presence of humanitarian assistance. This number is expected to increase to 2.1 million people through December 2020, in the absence of humanitarian assistance. An additional 2.5 million people are Stressed (IPC Phase 2), bringing the total number of people experiencing acute food insecurity to 3.8 million. In addition, 849,900 children under the age of five years face acute malnutrition over the next 12 months (September 2020 to August 2021), including 143,400 likely to be severely malnourished.

The 2020 *gu* season exhibited erratic performance, with rains starting as early as late March in many parts of Somalia, then intensified in April, with heavy rain leading to riverine and flash floods through September, impacting food security according to FSNAU. The 2020 *Gu* harvest in southern Somalia is reportedly 40 per cent lower than the long-term average for 1995-2019, mainly due to successive and severe flooding, erratic rainfall, a prolonged dry spell and protracted insecurity/conflict.

In northwest regions, the 2020 Gu/Karan cereal production (harvest expected in November) is estimated at 45 per cent lower than the average for 2010-2019, mainly due to erratic rainfall.

The current and projected levels of acute food insecurity and malnutrition in Somalia remain high although both the magnitude and severity are lower compared to earlier projections. This is in part due to support provided by the Government and large scale and sustained humanitarian assistance that have prevented the worsening of food security and nutrition outcomes across many parts of Somalia. According to the Somalia Food Security Cluster, an average of 1.85 million people received food assistance monthly from April to August. Approximately 400,000 people also benefitted from government-led rural and urban safety net programmes. In April, the Government enacted a 20 to 100 per cent tax exemption on imported food commodities in order to mitigate the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on the population.

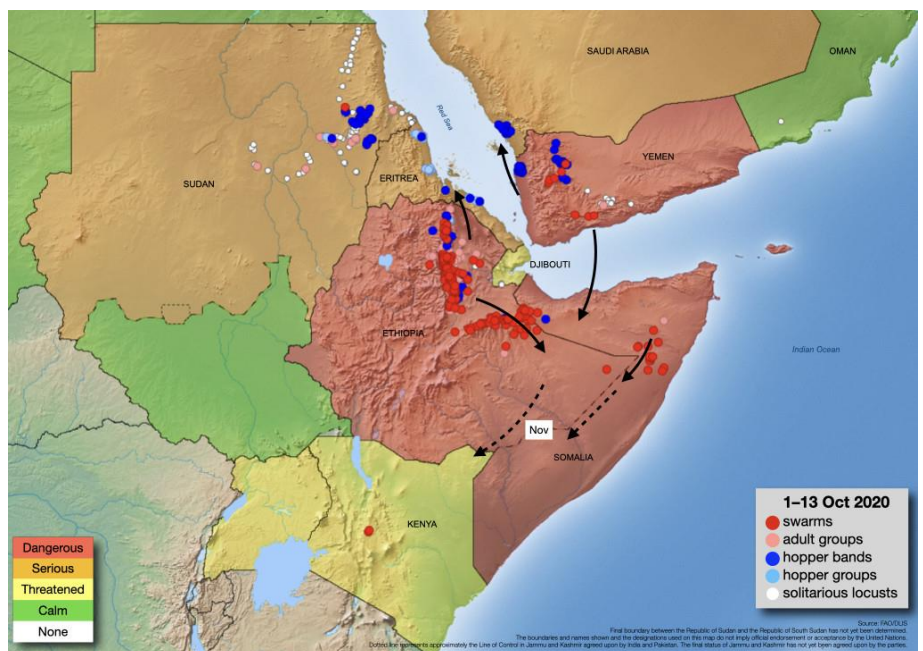
Humanitarian needs are likely to increase in 2021 due to the influence of a La Nina that is currently developing (75 per cent chance through February 2021). Potential drought conditions will likely develop as a result of below average 2020 *deyr* (October to December), a harsh 2021 dry *jilaal* (January to March) season and a possible delay and/or poor performance of the 2021 *gu* (April to June).

Food Security partners have recommended sustained support through December 2020 to address the urgent needs of the people who are likely to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or Emergency (IPC Phase 4), and livelihoods for people in Stressed or worse (IPC Phase 2 or higher), who are likely to slide into Crisis or Emergency when they are unable to cope with shocks. Urgent nutrition and health support is required to address the needs, including for areas with high prevalence of acute maternal malnutrition.

Desert locust hazards threaten to increase the acutely food insecure population in late 2020

A desert locust infestation since January continues to pose a serious risk of damage to both pasture and crops at least until the end of 2020, according to FAO. In February, the Somalia's Agriculture Ministry declared the locust invasion a national emergency and a major threat to the country's fragile food security situation. The infestation has been mostly confined to northern and central regions, causing significant damage to crop (cereals and vegetables) and fruit trees, especially in Togdheer and Woqooyi Galbeed. The heavy 2020 *gu* season rainfall in April through mid-May and *hagaa/karan* rains in July-September however moderated the impact and replenished pasture and browse across most regions.

FAO and the Federal Government have surveyed 380,000 hectares between January and September in Somaliland, Puntland and Galmudug, and sprayed 73,097 hectares with bio-pesticides. Despite ongoing control operations, the latest [FAO forecasts](#) indicate that the situation remains critical with immature adult locust populations persisting in the northeast and northwest regions. Cross-border movements by several swarms have been reported between Ethiopia and northwest Somalia. Control operations are being scaled up with increased aerial capacity, vehicles and additional biopesticide stock delivered. The Somalia locust response requires US\$56.9 million of which \$49.6 million has been received.



Desert locust situation in Somalia. Source: FAO.

At least 167,000 people displaced by floods in September

Seasonal *hagaa* flooding since July has resulted in the displacement of nearly 342,000 people, inundated 294 villages and destroyed property and about 15,000 to 20,000 hectares of assorted crops, mainly in rural areas along the Juba and Shabelle river valleys, according to the UNHCR-led Protection and Return Monitoring Network (PRMN) in Somalia. Of the total displaced, around 167,000 people have been displaced since 1 September, mainly in Wanla Weyne (~93,000) in Lower Shabelle, Jowhar (~41,000) in Middle Shabelle, and Belet Weyne (~28,000) in Hiraan regions. On 27 September, nearly 15,000 people were displaced, and more villages afflicted in Jowhar District of Middle Shabelle, according to PRMN. According to community leaders, those affected have moved to higher grounds to escape the floodwaters that have submerged houses, damaged boreholes/wells, and destroyed farmlands. The flooding situation continues to affect access to food and livelihoods and is likely to disrupt planting and harvesting for an already food insecure population.

According to FAO SWALIM, the river levels have reduced slightly in the upper reaches but remain above the high flood risk levels at Belet Weyne and Bullo Burto along the Shabelle, due to continuing moderate to heavy rains in the Ethiopian highlands, where River Shabelle originates. The flooding pattern along the Shabelle river has been changing gradually from dry periods, to three seasons (*gu'*, *deyr* and *hagaa*) flooding, evidently showing the effects of climate change in the region.

The IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Center (ICPAC) [forecast for October](#) projects moderate rainfall in parts of Southern Somalia and moderate to heavy rains in parts of Puntland and central regions. Significant heavy rainfall is expected in Hiraan, Bakool, Galgaduud, Mudug, Nugaal and southern parts of Sool region, with flash floods occurring in parts of Bari, Nugaal, Sool and Sanaag areas. Light to moderate rains are also expected across the northern parts of the country. With forecast below average 2020 *deyr* season (September to December) rainfall, the risk of flooding is expected to be low, but flooding may still occur during the season and could cause additional damages. People living in flood-prone areas along Shabelle and Juba rivers have been urged to remain vigilant as authorities and partners plan mitigation and response measures. In 2019, *deyr* floods displaced over 370,000 people in the riverine areas.

Previous Region	Jul-2020	Aug-2020	Sep-2020	Oct-2020	Grand Total
Lower Shabelle	55,911	27,260	96,962		180,133
Middle Shabelle	75,247	14,148	41,898	129	131,422
Hiraan	22	512	27,692		28,226
Banadir	953	778			1,731
Lower Juba	100	87			187
Bari			79		79
Middle Juba	68				68
Bay	17				17
Sanaag			16		16
Woqooyi Galbeed		5			5
Grand Total	132,318	42,790	166,647	129	341,884

Numbers of people displaced by floods since July 2020. Source: PRMN

PARTNERS SCALE-UP COVID-19 RESPONSE

The Government has continued the gradual reopening of different sectors of the economy, following a decrease in the number of reported COVID-19 cases. Health partners including the Federal Ministry of Health (MoH) have however reported gaps in the geographic coverage of COVID-19 testing, with some districts reporting no confirmed cases in September due to lack of testing capacity. Therefore, analysis of the trends is not conclusive. As of 14 October, the MoH confirmed 3,864 COVID-19 cases with more than 3,000 recoveries and 99 deaths.

The resumption of domestic and international flights since August, has boosted the crucial air transport in the country, enabling the movement of aid workers and delivery of supplies. Schools continue with the phased reopening since August amidst challenges related to social distancing, physical space and prevention. According to Education Cluster Partners at least 900,000 face masks and 16,728 digital thermometers are needed to support the safe reopening of schools for the 900,000 children targeted under the COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan (CPRP). Risk communication and community engagement has been strengthened through Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster partners, covering more than one million people (42 per cent of 2.6 million IDPs) since August. The Logistics Cluster has also transported over 34 tons of COVID-19 related cargo to various parts of the country.

Insecurity, lack of access, funding and operation challenges remain a major constraint for response. The US\$256 million humanitarian component of the Somalia COVID-19 CPRP launched in April is only 31 per cent (\$78.5 million) as of 14 October.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ON THE INCREASE AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Protection Cluster partners have reported a spike in incidents of intimate partner violence, rape, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment and abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic period. This is largely attributed to the COVID-19 restrictions on movement that have seen families being confined in small spaces, as well as economic and social stresses induced by the pandemic. Findings from the [Information Management Systems 2020](#) indicate that 61 per cent of the GBV incidents comprise physical assault, 13 per cent rape, 12 per cent sexual assault, 6 per cent psychological/emotional abuse, 5 per cent experienced denial of resources and 3 per cent forced/early marriage.

Violence against children, both inside and outside of the home has reportedly increased and is made worse by the lack of avenues through which to report abuse and seek adequate assistance, according to a [Child Protection COVID-19 Survey](#). Negative coping mechanisms, including child labour and child marriage have been reported, with boys at higher risk of recruitment into armed groups. Child Protection Area of Responsibility partners' staff continued to raise awareness on child protection and COVID-19 risks with community leaders. clinical management of rape, psychosocial support, and legal aid remain the priority needs for GBV survivors.

FUNDING UPDATE

Somalia Humanitarian Fund allocates US\$9.26 million for flood response

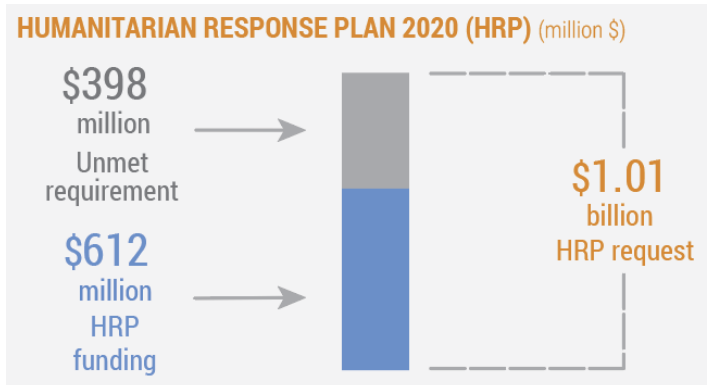
The Somalia Humanitarian Fund (SHF) has triggered a reserve allocation of \$9.26 million to respond to floods in the worst affected districts of Balcad, Jowhar and Mahaday in Middle Shabelle (Hirshabelle), Afgooye and Wanla Weyn districts in Lower Shabelle (South West State) and Belet Weyne (Hiraan), where over 85 per cent of the displacement has occurred.

The response is designed to boost the ongoing lifesaving assistance and targets the most vulnerable individuals and households in the worst affected areas through cluster specific targeting. At least 88 per cent of the envelope is allocated towards priority activities in Food Security, Health, Logistics, Protection with emphasis on child protection and GBV, Shelter/NFI, and WASH clusters, while 12 per cent will go to integrated response consisting of two integrated packages namely, integrated Health and Nutrition activities and integrated Education/Child Protection/WASH activities.

Meanwhile the SHF continued to support related reprogramming of COVID-19 requests from its partners. As of September, 15 partners have reprogrammed activities to the amount to \$110,462.

Clusters report disproportionate funding under the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP)

Humanitarian needs in Somalia remain high, with \$612 million (60 per cent) out of the \$1.01 billion HRP funded as of 14 October. This has enabled humanitarian actors to meet at least 61 per cent of the overall requirements. However, needs in the key clusters such as Health and Protection, which are 40 and 30 per cent funded respectively, remain high, amid an increase in disease outbreaks and gender-based violence. Partners are advocating for more funding across sectors.



In brief

RESTORING DIGNITY TO DISPLACED WOMEN – AMINA’S STORY

Ensuring the respect for the dignity of women and girls living in IDP settlements in Mogadishu remains a major concern for mainstreaming protection in humanitarian response in Somalia. Somali Young Doctors Association (SOYDA), a national NGO with funding from the SHF, is among the actors who are implementing a multi-sectoral approach that includes the distribution of dignity kits for the IDPs and host community in Kahda, Daynile and Dharkenley districts.

Amina Derow, a mother of three, was displaced from her home in Awdheegle District in late 2018, following an Al Shabaab attack that left several houses burnt and hundreds of people displaced to an IDP site in Kahada District, Banadir region.

“I fled the village carrying nothing and even missed prayers because I never had enough clothes to cover myself since all the household stuff were burnt,” said Amina.

Majority of the displaced people were women and children who reportedly fled with only the clothes they were wearing at the time of the attack. “We feared for our life and no one could think of clothes,” said Amina.

SOYDA has ensured that the women can lead a decent life amid the challenging circumstances in displacement, through the provision of full dignity kits that comprises of dresses, shawls, pieces of sanitary pads, pants, bar soap and head scarfs.

“The dignity kits give us a more protective environment and ensures that we operate in a respectful way, especially when we pray,” adds Amina.

For further information, please contact:

Ogoso, Erich Opolot | Head of Communications | ogoso@un.org | Tel. +254 720 766 587.

Ayub Ahmed | Public Information Officer | Mobile: +252619150463 | ayub.ahmed@un.org

Truphosa Anjichi-Kodumbe | Humanitarian Reporting & Public Information Officer | anjichi@un.org | Tel. +254 722 839182

OCHA humanitarian bulletins are available at www.unocha.org/somalia | www.reliefweb.int