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- Humanitarians step up vaccination campaigns.
- Lack of funding hampers aid operation.



Candle lights a local organization in Somaliland, carries out health promotion campaigns in Baar and Kalgudhun villages (PHOTO/SHF)

FIGURES

# of people in need	5.4m
# of people in humanitarian emergency and crisis (IPC Phases 3 &4)	2.m
# of people Emergency (IPC Phase 4)	0.5m
# of children projected to be malnourished	1.2m
# of people displaced internally by drought since November 2016	1.6m
# of people in protracted internal displacement	1.1m

FUNDING

\$1.5 BILLION

requested in the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan

\$525 MILLION

Total humanitarian funding received towards the 2018 HRP

(Source : <http://fts.unocha.org>, 29 June, 2018)

Children at grave risk as violations spike



Twelve-year-old Abdi* remembers with sadness the day he was forced to leave his home in the Jilib district of Jubaland State in January this year. He had been detained by Al-Shabaab while on his way to madrasa (school), but managed to escape. Abdi was forced to flee to Kismayo, the state capital some 76 kilometers away, leaving behind the only place he had ever called home. He didn't even get a chance to say goodbye to his friends and five siblings. "I miss them every day," he says.

His mother had repeatedly told him that she could not afford to lose another child, and she encouraged him to escape. The family's two older boys, then aged 14 and 15, were among boys who had been recruited by Al-Shabaab a year earlier. They have not been heard from, nor seen, since.

With just a few belongings, Abdi and some other boys from his village arrived in Kismayo, joining a growing number of unaccompanied children who have been driven out of their homes as Al-Shabaab steps up its recruitment in communities across southern and central areas of Somalia. Abdi's story tallies with those of hundreds of other children who roam the streets of Kismayo, and other urban areas, after being forced to flee their homes. However, he has luckily been reunited with his mother in Kismayo following family reunification efforts by a local humanitarian partner. The mother left behind her other children to escape pressure to disclose the whereabouts of her son. The father died two years ago. Abdi and his mother are now living in one of the settlements designated for internally displaced people, on the outskirts of the town.

The increasing cases of separation of children from their homes is a harsh reality for parents facing pressure from armed forces and groups to surrender their kin. While in some instances families relocate in unison, many are often sent away from unsafe areas to prevent them falling into the hands of Al Shabaab. The cases of children being forced to flee recruitment are rampant in Galmudug and South West states, according to the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms.

Although the extent of the practice is difficult to quantify, anecdotal evidence suggests that thousands of children are at risk, according to the child protection sub-Cluster. A notable trend has been the intimidation of vulnerable communities in southern and central Somalia to 'volunteer' their children for recruitment. However, nothing is voluntary, as communities face repercussions, including arrests and fines, for refusing to comply. Last September, Al-Shabaab ordered elders in the Diinsoor district of South West State to hand over 300

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children. The elders reportedly advised parents to instead send their children to government-controlled areas. The elders were subsequently arrested, forcing the community to surrender some children in exchange for their release. By the end of September 2017, 158 children had been sent to safety in the state. While many of the unaccompanied children are taken in by relatives, a majority are at risk of other protection violations, including abuse and exploitative labour, if they are not assisted on arrival.

Grave violations of children's rights by armed forces and groups are widespread in Somalia. In the first quarter of 2018, the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms verified numerous incidents of the grave violations, including abductions, rape and other sexual violence acts, child recruitment, killing and maiming, denial of humanitarian access for children and attacks on schools or hospitals. Some 990 violations of children (817 boys and 173 girls) were recorded. This is an increase from 794 children (648 boys and 146 girls) verified in the same period of 2017. Additionally, some 448 children (435 boys, 13 girls) were reportedly recruited by armed forces and groups, in the same period. This was an increase compared to the 397 children (389 boys and 8 girls) recruited in the same period of 2017. They vary in age from seven to 17 years.

Scaling up the protection response

Humanitarian partners are scaling up assistance to the children affected by armed conflicts. Between January and June, the Child Protection sub-Cluster reached 4,367 separated and unaccompanied children (2,497 boys, 1870 girls). Services provided include family tracing and reunification, material assistance, recreational and psychosocial support, and interim care by foster families for those who are unaccompanied. In the same period, 415 children (89 girls and 326 boys) were enrolled in UNICEF-supported reintegration centres in Banadir region, Hirshabelle, South West, and Puntland states, following their release or rescue from armed forces and groups. Most children risk being separated from their families for longer periods, as reunification is only possible if their areas of origin enjoy relative security.

Challenges hindering an effective response include weak legislation and limited social services. Authorities continue to work with the international community to end violations against children and guarantee child rights in conflict situations. However, a lot more needs to be done to ensure protection of vulnerable children from forced recruitment. International partners are providing technical support to the Federal Government of Somalia, to ensure a national reintegration strategy is in place to prevent child recruitment, and to facilitate the release and reintegration of those still in the hands of armed forces and militant groups.

New Minister of Humanitarian Affairs appointed.

H.E. Hamza Said Hamza has taken the helm as the Federal Government of Somalia's Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management.

Mr. Hamza Said Hamza has taken the helm as the Federal Government of Somalia's Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management. He is also a Member of Parliament of the house of people. Minister Hamza is a graduate of the Somali National University, Faculty of Foreign Languages, he completed his degree in 1978. He is fluent in English, Arabic, Somali, Italian, Spanish, Kiswahili and Somali's Bravanese. He was previously a community leader in the USA and worked in the education sector for over 20 years.



Outgoing DHC Vincent Lelei

After more than 15 years of global humanitarian service in six countries, serving under six Emergency Relief Coordinators and three UN Secretary Generals, Mr. Vincent Lelei, the Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, has retired. Ahead of his retirement, he

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spoke to OCHA about his experience in the UN, particularly in Somalia, where he spent the last years of his career responding to one of the world’s most protracted humanitarian emergencies, and the significance of being the Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator (DHC).



What were the most significant moments of your tenure as DHC for Somalia?

I arrived at the beginning of 2017 to take up the DHC position, at a time when the country was facing tremendous humanitarian challenges. This was my fourth assignment to Somalia, and I was more than aware of some existing problems, as well as the expectations of my role. At the time, the country was on the brink of famine, and my role was to

strengthen the leadership and delivery of humanitarian coordination activities in order to ensure a joint and coherent response to the crisis. I was also tasked to work with the Federal Government of Somalia to find opportunities to increase its collaboration with humanitarian actors and support it in better responding to the needs of its people.

I must commend both the authorities and the humanitarian community, who were unified in their agreement regarding the urgent need to rally support for famine prevention efforts. This made our work easier. Many donors responded quickly to the call for aid and helped us to avert a catastrophe.

One of the key challenges in delivering aid to people in need was widespread access constraints. Large areas of the country were inaccessible to aid agencies and I had the insurmountable task of finding ways to assist humanitarians in reaching those areas and responding to the growing needs. We have made significant strides in increasing humanitarian access across many areas. I had effective and robust engagements with authorities in Jubaland, South West and Puntland states, among other areas. This was not the case in the past. I am optimistic that the Federal Government and state authorities are doing more to address access challenges in many parts of the country than ever before.

Q. Has the humanitarian situation in Somalia improved?

Important strides have been made in addressing the humanitarian situation. At one level, we did really well and averted a famine last year. We countered the widespread fear that the country was at risk of sliding into another devastating famine (as witnessed in 2011). We managed to do so partly because of the government’s leadership, but also because of the enormous support from donors. Together with authorities and the humanitarian community, we made key gains. However, the humanitarian situation remains fragile.

Q. What have you learnt in your tenure as DHC for Somalia?

Somalia has been very close to me. I participated in supporting Somalis when they first fled their country. As a Kenyan government official, I worked to establish refugee camps along the Somali border. These were eventually transformed into Dadaab, one of the largest refugee camps in the world. On my latest assignment, I witnessed thousands of Somalis rush back home to rebuild their country, their politics and their institutions. I have learned that there is a strong commitment from everybody to move forward, despite a lot of protracted issues between individuals and groups, as well as systemic problems. My only concern is that a large part of the country has been marginalized by extremely precarious conditions, particularly with regards to internal displacement. There is an urgent need for long-term solutions to land and property rights issues, so that every Somali feels part of the country. Only then will Somalia thrive. I am optimistic that this will happen.

I came to Somalia focused on humanitarian intervention. However, as in my previous roles, I always look for opportunities across the system. I have learned that it is possible for the entire UN to work as one, to achieve political, development and humanitarian progress.

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Despite above average rainfall, a food insecurity crisis remains with an estimated 5.4 million people in need of assistance across the country.

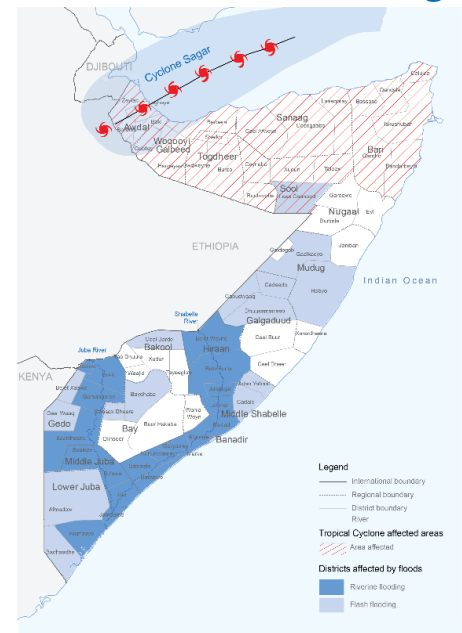
Only by doing so, can we achieve significant milestones. My driving force is my commitment to fighting injustice with regards to the abuse of resources, the denial of services to populations, the marginalization of certain population segments and the extreme violations of minorities by majority groups.

Q. In your view, what is next for Somalia?

It is difficult to predict. A lot of major challenges remain. However, Somalis are a resilient people. Going forward, they will continue to struggle with numerous challenges. However, I don't think Somalia will go back to where it was in the 1980s and parts of the 1990s.

Gu rainy season ends, but needs remain high

The record levels of rainfall seen during the April – June *Gu* rainy season have ushered in hopes of the substantial replenishment of water resources, and the restoration of cropland and livestock numbers across many areas of Somalia. The latest food security outlook by the Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWSNET) and the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) reports that food security will improve significantly in many of the areas worst-affected by the 2016/17 drought, as a result of improvements in seasonal performance supported by large-scale humanitarian assistance. However, the magnitude and intensity of the rains, coupled with the subsequent flooding, has aggravated vulnerabilities. Vulnerable communities, still recovering from the adverse effects of protracted drought, are among those who have been most severely affected by flooding.



The flooding affected 830,000 people in southern and central areas of Somalia. Of these, nearly 300,000 were temporarily displaced. Another 228,000 people were affected by Cyclone Sagar in the north, while the armed conflict between the forces of Somaliland and Puntland in Tukaraq have so far displaced more than 12,800 people.

Despite above average rainfall, a food insecurity crisis remains with an estimated 5.4 million people in need of assistance across the country, due to the lingering effects of drought, conflict and marginalization. Malnutrition cases and disease outbreaks have continued to surge. More than a million children are projected to be malnourished by the end of the year. Some 5,239 AWD/cholera, 6,778 malaria and 6,311 measles cases have been reported in the first half of 2018 alone. Thankfully, the number of AWD/cholera and measles cases reported is much lower than in 2017, when 71,663 cases of AWD/cholera and 12,336 cases of measles were reported. Humanitarian partners have attributed this to an increase in immunization campaigns in 2017 and 2018.

An estimated 2.6 million Somalis, are now internally displaced, the latest displacement tracking and monitoring analysis has revealed.

Some 2.6 million people are now estimated to be internally displaced

The latest displacement tracking and monitoring analysis has estimated that 2.6 million Somalis are now internally displaced. These include 1.6 million people who had been displaced prior to November 2016, many of them protracted cases from the 2011 famine and decades of conflict before, and a million people who had been displaced by the recent drought and conflict. IDPs are among the most vulnerable and are largely dependent on humanitarian assistance. They constitute nearly half of those in need of assistance. They lack access to shelter and basic services, and are at an elevated risk of serious protection-related risks, such as physical attacks, gender-based violence — particularly rape, sexual exploitation and abuse — and restrictions on movement.

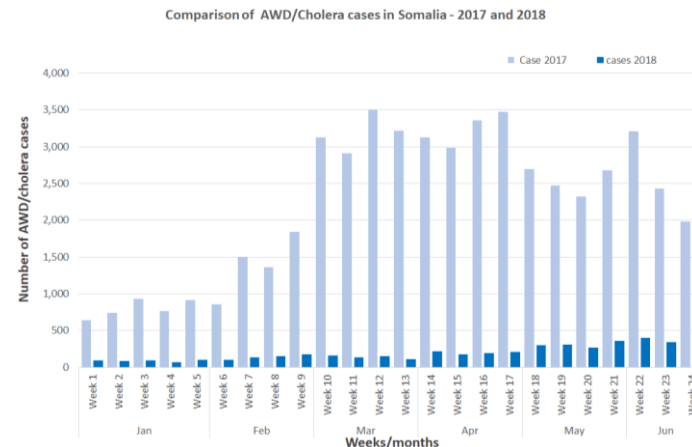
Humanitarian partners are stepping up efforts to contain the spread of the outbreak.

Humanitarians sustain scaled up assistance to people in need

Aid agencies continued to provide life-saving assistance at elevated levels across the country given the number of people in need. In May, food security partners reached nearly two million people with improved access to food and safety nets (IASN assistance). Health partners deployed 21 mobile health clinics in areas where medical facilities were destroyed by the flooding. The health cluster continues to respond to the flooding crises, providing consultation services to close to 489,000 patients in flood-affected districts. Routine vaccinations for tuberculosis, tetanus and measles are ongoing. Some 108,500 new cases of acute malnutrition, and over 116,000 cases of moderate acute malnutrition, were treated. And, 154,000 people were reached with Infant and Young Child Feeding counselling. WASH partners reached over 108,000 beneficiaries with hygiene kits, to curb AWD/cholera. Following the devastating impact of the flooding in numerous areas, AMISOM evacuated some of the people who were adversely affected to higher ground, in Hirshabelle State and provided them with fresh water. AMISOM also supported the communities to undertake repairs and rebuild dykes in South West State after the Shabelle River burst its banks. These interventions by AMISOM were in line with the country specific civil-military guidelines developed between the humanitarian community and AMISOM between 2013 and 2015.

Humanitarians step up vaccination campaigns to curb epidemics

A gradual increase in cases of Acute Water Diarrhea (AWD)/cholera has been recorded since late January this year. Humanitarians partly attribute the hike to flooding in the Juba and Shabelle river basins that led to the contamination of water sources. The floods also damaged health facilities and cut off access for some communities. The AWD/cholera outbreak that started in December 2017, in Hirshabelle State, has spread to Banadir region, Jubaland and South West states. Overall, since December 2017, some 5,239 cumulative cases have been recorded, mostly in South West State.



Humanitarian partners are stepping up efforts to contain the spread of the outbreak. In April, an oral cholera vaccination campaign took place in hotspot areas in Banadir region, Hirshabelle, Jubaland and South West, states. These areas have a high concentration of displaced persons. The first round reached 90 per cent of the targeted 1.4 million people and the second, 85 per cent. Meanwhile, the

WASH Cluster is undertaking preventive measures, including the distribution of hygiene kits, public education through hygiene promotion campaigns, and the chlorination of water sources. Health Cluster partners have pre-positioned 44 tons of medical supplies in the affected districts.

Separately, of the 6,311 suspected cases of measles reported since January, the majority are children under the age of 5. The highest number of cases have been seen in Banadir region and South West and Galmudug states. In 2017, 12,336 cases were reported. Humanitarian partners have attributed the low number of reported AWD/cholera and measles cases to vaccination campaigns conducted in all states of Somalia in January and March, which reached 4.4 million (94 per cent) of the targeted children under age 5. Meanwhile, no cases of wild-polio have been detected following laboratory tests by the polio surveillance network. A supplementary immunization for polio is underway across

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southern and central Somalia. Two vaccination rounds are planned for July, following last year's successful campaigns in Banadir region and, Hirshabelle and South West states.

Lack of funding impedes effective response

At the end of the first half of the year, the total amount received for the 2018 Somalia Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) is US\$525. With more than 5.4 million people in need of assistance, and the fragile humanitarian situation further compounded by the above-average *Gu* rains and subsequent flooding, the destruction caused by Cyclone Sagar and longstanding conflicts and marginalization, many clusters are already facing a challenge to sustain scaled-up operations.

TOTAL HUMANITARIAN FUNDING (million \$)



HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN (HRP)



the country remains worrying and more funding is urgently needed.

As of 28 June, an additional \$168 million has been provided outside the HRP to partners or activities not coordinated under the cluster system, but that contribute to similar strategic end. Funding trends show a decrease in resources when compared to 2017, though humanitarian needs have remained high. Overall, the funding received so far is equal to 84 per cent of what had been received at this stage in 2017. While it is possible that the above-average rainy season will lead to an improved food security outlook, the humanitarian situation in

SHF has allocated \$26.5 million this year

Since the beginning of the year, the Somalia Humanitarian Fund (SHF) has allocated more than \$26.5 million through its Standard Allocation and Reserve windows. Most recently, the Humanitarian Coordinator allocated \$3.5 million from the SHF Reserve to support the response to Cyclone Sagar, targeting four districts in the worst-hit region of Awdal. The funds will be used to conduct emergency restoration works in priority community structures, including schools, health facilities and water points. Simultaneously, the funds will support mobile outreach support (health, nutrition and WASH services) in the affected areas to ensure continued access to basic services. The funding will also support the rebuilding of livelihoods, through the provision of shelter repair kits and the distribution of agricultural equipment, fishing gear and livestock. Critically, agricultural inputs will allow farmers to take advantage of the residual moisture to plant short maturing crops

Earlier in 2018, \$22 million was disbursed through the First Standard Allocation, for the flood response. In addition, \$1 million has been allocated from the SHF Reserve for integrated child protection services and education interventions in flood-affected areas.

Funding trends show a decrease in resources when compared to 2017, though humanitarian needs have remained high.

The HC allocated \$3.5 million from the SHF Reserve to support the response to Cyclone Sagar in Somaliland.

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