

# Humanitarian Bulletin

## SOMALIA

1 – 31 May 2019

### HIGHLIGHTS

- \$710m needed for drought response.
- Averting the impact of drought on public health.
- Somalia continues to intensify efforts to stop spread of polio.
- Interview with UN WFP Country Director and Representative.
- Comparison of funding levels 2017-2019.

### FIGURES

# of food insecure people 4.9m

# of people in humanitarian Crisis and Emergency (IPC Phases 3 &4) 1.5m

# of people Stressed (IPC Phase 2) 3.4m

# of children projected to be malnourished in 2019 1.2m

# of people displaced internally by drought since November 2016 1.6m

# of people in protracted internal displacement 1.1m

### FUNDING

**\$1.08 BILLION**

requested in the 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan

**\$234 MILLION**

Total humanitarian funding received for the 2019 HRP

Source <http://fts.unocha.org>  
31 May 2019.



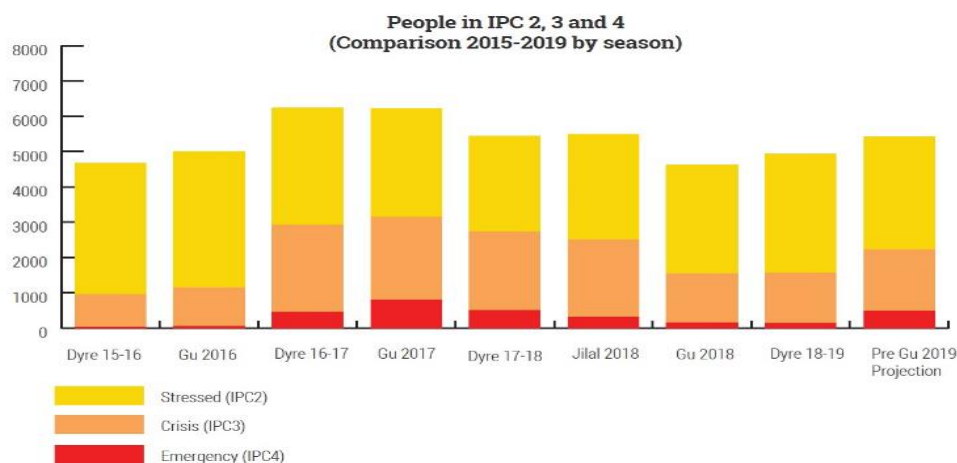
Displacement is on the rise as families lose their socio economic safety nets. In 2019, 53,000 people have been displaced by drought.

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## \$710m needed for drought response

As Somalia experienced a failure of the initial portion of the Gu' rains that are crucial for agricultural production, aid agencies have launched a Drought Response Plan calling for urgent and sustained resources to avert a major crisis. The plan seeks \$710 million to provide critical life-saving aid to 4.5 million people in the most severely-affected areas from now until the end of the year.



The combined impact of the initial failure of the 2019 *Gu'* rains (April-June), which followed a poor 2018 *Deyr* season (October-December), and abnormally dry conditions during the 2019 *Jilal* season (January-March), has caused widespread crop failure and a decline in livestock productivity, rapidly pushing communities in the worst-affected areas into a food insecurity Crisis (IPC 3), or worse. While the rains in May have rebounded to a degree, which will assist with water availability and the livestock sector, the 2019 *Gu'* is a second consecutive below-average rainy season, in a country still recovering from a prolonged drought in 2016-17. Except the 2018 *Gu'*, every rainy season since late 2015 has been below average, leading to increased vulnerability and decreased coping ability. This year's *Gu'* season is the third driest on record since the early 1980s.

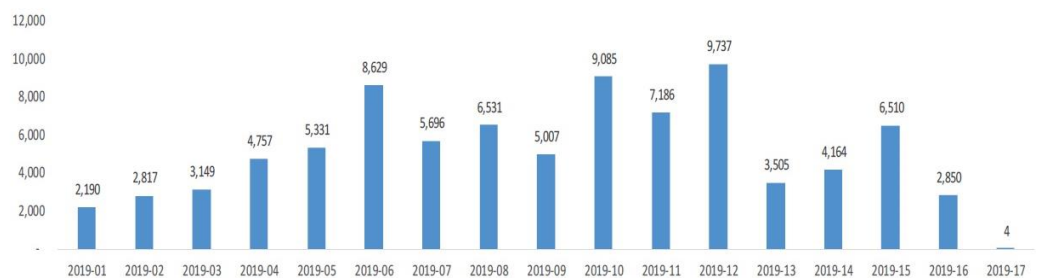
The number of people in the Crisis and Emergency levels of food insecurity is projected to reach 2.2 million by July, if aid is not scaled up. This is more than 40 per cent higher than the projection in January. Overall, 5.4 million people will be food insecure by July. Although *Gu'* rainfall in May improved in some areas, the rains have generally performed worse than the predicted average-to-near average for May. Many areas have experienced torrential rains in abbreviated period, which do not assist agricultural

The number of people in the Crisis and Emergency levels of food insecurity (or worse) is expected to reach 2.2 million by July, if aid is not scaled up.

production but have led to flash flooding and deaths in some instances. FAO-FSNAU estimates up to 50 per cent decline in this year's harvest.

Severe acute malnutrition rates among children are increasing rapidly, mainly among internally displaced persons (IDPs). This, coupled with a serious lack of access to clean water, is heightening the risk of outbreaks from water-borne diseases, exacerbating existing fragilities. Drought is also driving displacement and worsening protection challenges, particularly for women and children, as families lose their socio-economic safety nets. So far this year, 53,000 people have been displaced by drought, adding to the estimated 2.6 million internally displaced Somalis, 80 per cent of whom live in urban areas, where they face serious risks of eviction, marginalization and exclusion.

weekly analysis of displacements



The number of people in crisis and emergency levels of food insecurity or worse is projected to reach 2.2 million by July. “The drought in Somalia has deteriorated rapidly and intensified much earlier than seen over the last decade. Somalia is at a critical juncture, but with sufficient resources, we can reactivate the structures that successfully averted famine in 2017,” said Mr George Conway, the acting Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia. “As we continue to work under the leadership of Somali authorities to rebuild resilience and address the underlying causes of such recurrent crises, it is now critical that everyone, including donors, the private sector, Somalis in-country and in the diaspora, rallies behind these collective response and prevention efforts,” he added.

The drought threatens to reverse the gains made in 2018. An immediate scale-up of the humanitarian response is required to mitigate the effects of the drought, which threatens to drive Somalia into a major humanitarian crisis. The scale-up should be complemented by development efforts (through the government’s Resilience and Recovery Framework), to ensure that Somalia is better prepared to face future shocks. The 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan, which sought \$1.08 billion for the year, was only 20 per cent funded by the end of May. The appeal has since been superseded by the Drought Response Plan (DRP) requirement of \$710m for June through December 2019. The resources are so inadequate that it isn’t that activities can’t scale up, but that response is actually being scaled back in some areas. The scale-back impacts several drought-affected areas, which then contributes to more displacement.

The recurrent climatic shocks are a stark reminder that Somalia is becoming increasingly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. To address the drivers of the crisis, greater investment is needed to strengthen the nexus between humanitarian action and development programming. Urgent life-saving responses must be ramped up, but without losing sight of the fact that development efforts are critical to reaching the goal of ultimately ending the negative impact of these cycles.

WHO experts are warning of serious health consequences if the government and partners fail to quickly boost the response.

## Averting the impact of drought on public health

As the impact of the failure of the initial half of the *Gu’* season in Somalia materializes, the World Health Organization (WHO) has reported an increase in acute watery diarrhoea

Although current figures are lower than 2017, increases in AWD/cholera cases and acutely malnourished children are already being recorded.

(AWD) and confirmed cases of cholera. The drought has led to internal displacement, food insecurity, high malnutrition and limited access to safe water and proper sanitation, leaving already-vulnerable people prone to disease.



Minister of Health, Mohamed Said and WHO Representative Dr. Mamunur Malik, during a visit to assess the health situation in Baidoa.

Between December 2017 to date, some 7,368 cases and 46 related deaths, have been recorded in 25 districts along the Juba and Shabelle River basins. Of these, 607 cases were reported in 13 of Banadir's 17 districts this year. In 2017, the country witnessed a nation-wide measles and AWD/cholera outbreak which affected more than 100,000 cumulatively between January and October. WHO experts are warning of serious health consequences if the government and partners fail to quickly boost the response.

A high-level Ministry of Health/WHO mission led by Mohamed Said, Somalia's Deputy Minister of Health, and Dr. Malik Mamunur, the WHO Representative to Somalia, visited Baidoa in South West State, on 11 May, to assess the health effects of the drought on the local population. The mission, joined by state-level health authorities, visited health centres in IDP settlements and the regional referral hospital. Although current figures are lower than 2017, projections indicate the likelihood of an increase in both AWD/cholera cases and acutely malnourished children.

To prevent the spread of AWD/cholera, and measles, and to tackle increasing malnutrition rates, WHO has prepositioned emergency life-saving medical supplies, including cholera kits, and is providing case management training for health staff. WHO is also strengthening the Early Warning Alert and Response Network, and disease surveillance to enable early detection and a timely response. Health partners are prepared to urgently boost the response in drought affected areas and are appealing to donors and the government to urgently provide additional resources and life-saving integrated health and nutrition services to support a timely and adequate response.

## Interview with UN WFP Country Director and Representative for Somalia, Laurent Bukera

**A. After spending years working in Somalia, what is your assessment of the situation?**



**Q.** When I joined World Food Programme in Somalia in 2014, I immediately travelled to various parts of the country to see the situation firsthand, and to think of how we could help to improve the situation in an effective and efficient manner. I saw a Somalia that was still recovering from effects of conflict and famine.

I see a Somalia that is now full of promise and opportunities. The State architecture is in place, extending all the way through district levels, with district

commissioners close to the people and advocating for their people. Universities are producing young graduates, all energetic and talented Somalis eager to play their part in the rebuilding efforts.

The situation has improved remarkably. Now, I see a Somalia that is full of promise and opportunities.

Through SCOPE, we are able to carry out biometric registration of the people we assist. This reduces duplicate identities and guarantees that assistance is provided to the right individual.

The international actors continue to play a critical role with unwavering support, persistent and tireless efforts to support Somalis improve their country. For our part, with continued support from generous donors, we will do everything we can to sustain gains made and respond during crisis to lay the foundation for a stable and prosperous Somalia. We are working with a network of nearly 1,000 retailers to meet the needs of those we serve through the markets. To improve the food supply chain, we are focusing on food systems in order to support producers and connect them to markets, where those we support with cash or vouchers buy their food. Working with other partners, we are supporting the government to build a national social protection system, through the development of a social protection policy, a necessary foundation to establish a national system for the Somalis living in the most vulnerable situations.

**What are WFP's key highlights during your five years in Somalia?** The first that comes to mind is how, together with the government, donors and implementing partners, we averted famine in 2017 and saved lives. The 'total togetherness' is something I will never forget.



- The second is the implementation of cash programming (SCOPE system) to support the evolution of WFP evolution to cash-based transfers. This was massive and important for WFP's evolution and for those in need.
- The increased presence of WFP across Somalia, enabling us to be on the ground and engage with local authorities, UN and NGO partners as well as

- community leaders to identify the most effective and efficient ways to deliver value.
- The development of the WFP Strategy for Somalia (2019-2021), in consultation with stakeholders at all levels through a series of year-long consultations. The strategy, while supporting response to shocks, is about resilience building, support to systemic changes and maintaining the compass on the 'progress' direction.
- Above all, I have enjoyed listening to the insights and stories of people, colleagues and friends I met and engaged with during visits to many places these past 5 years.

**Somalia is facing another severe drought less than two years after escaping pre-famine conditions. What do you think needs to be done to mitigate the impact of climatic shocks?** We need to build resilience against all odds and introduce innovative and sustainable ways to mitigate the impact of climatic shocks. The use of drip irrigation is giving amazing results. It is supporting farmers and cooperatives to grow fruits and vegetables using minimum water while saving on scarcely available water especially during drought.

Where fertile land and irrigation supports agricultural production, farmers' cooperatives also need to be supported with post-harvest solutions to reduce food losses. Such techniques increase value of products and help them meet regional and global quality standards. Modern techniques like hydroponics, need to be introduced in Somalia as soon as possible for people to learn to use such techniques. These techniques allow plants to grow without soil, using 90 per cent lesser water than traditional techniques. **How has SCOPE card transformed the delivery of aid in Somalia? What do you think is the future of cash intervention?** We introduced the use of SCOPE in 2015. Through SCOPE, we are able to carry out biometric registration of the people we assist. We use it to manage cash, nutrition and in-kind food assistance. Cash-based transfers now make up 70 per cent of the total assistance we provide in Somalia. With these transfers we are able to give people purchasing power to choose the food they like and buy from shops, like anyone else, thus bringing a sense of normality even during crisis.

Cash-based transfers have helped lay the foundation of a social protection system, including providing social safety nets.

Cash-based transfers help boost the local economy and empower communities. We are working with nearly 1,000 retailers across the country.

For many of those receiving WFP assistance, a SCOPE card is a step towards financial inclusion, through which people interact with shops and financial institutions, retaining the control over their money. This is because only the card owner can sign-in biometrically to access goods or money they have received. This is particularly meaningful for the displaced people who lose everything when they leave their villages. Cash-based transfers have helped lay the foundation for the implementation of safety net systems and I believe this will inform a future social protection system in Somalia. Given the positive impact of cash-based transfers in Somalia, I can see more agencies providing such transfers in an ever more structured manner where markets are in place.

**Given the recurrence of climatic shocks and their severe impact on Somalis, what do you think needs to be done to balance life-saving and resilience building in addressing the drivers of the crisis?** Drought, floods and other climatic shocks are now a feature of climate change not only in Somalia but also across the world. As Somali communities become more resilient, they also get better at adapting to climatic shocks and coping with crisis. But we need to do more. Climatic shocks should not result in crisis and should not push people in the kind of desperate situations we have seen again with the current drought. Maintaining our ability to respond during crisis, while focusing on resilience and long-term development investments, is the only solution. For now, and until development actions' dividends are realized, it is neither 'one or the other'. It is all about saving lives today - and – building a better tomorrow

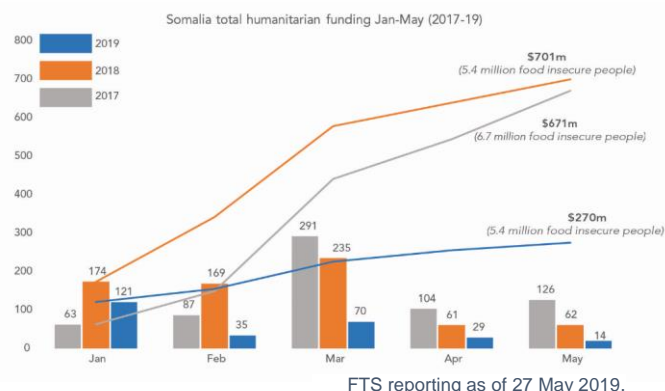
**How do you see the future of Somalia in terms of food security and resilience building?** Challenges are real and multiple with severe consequences on the lives of Somalis living in the most vulnerable circumstances. But I am an optimist and I believe Somalia's future is happening now – with the tireless engagement of Somalis and all the work of aid actors, the positive trajectory will continue. With it, the result of smart production, smart entrepreneurship, etc. I believe that within a decade, we will see a stable Somalia with resources to meet the needs of its people. A Somalia where social services, quality life and, sufficient and good food for all will be a reality for every person.

By May's end in 2017 and 2018, the Somalia operation had already received \$671 million and \$701 million, respectively.

## Comparison of funding levels 2017-2019

By 27 May, \$220 million had been mobilized against the 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), with an additional \$51 million received for activities outside the plan. The HRP, which requires 1.08 billion in 2019, is only 20 per cent funded. Current funding levels are in sharp contrast to the same period in 2017, which is predictable given the famine warning that came in January 2017, but also

compared to 2018, By May's end in 2017 and 2018, the Somalia operation had already received \$671 million and \$701 million, respectively.



By mid-2019, 2.2 million people will be in Emergency and Crisis (IPC Phase 3 and 4), compared to 2.9 million and 2.7 million people at the same time in 2017 and 2018. As the humanitarian situation rapidly deteriorates, critical sectors such as WASH, health and nutrition remain significantly underfunded at 13 per cent and seven per cent of their cluster-specific requirement. Although food security has received 31 per cent of its funding, much more is required to increase access to food and protect livelihoods. Funding levels for all other clusters are similarly dismal.

As reiterated in the Drought Response Plan, current humanitarian funding falls far short of meeting humanitarian needs, as partners have been forced to scale-back ongoing

programmes rather than scale-up to meet growing needs. Without an immediate increase in financial support, humanitarian partners will not be able to mitigate the looming risk of widespread hunger, malnutrition and displacement in Somalia over the coming months.

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