



**SOMALIA
DROUGHT SITUATION UP DATES**

FOR PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

MAY 2011

Summary

The long rainy season (*Gu'*) normally starts in Somalia in early April, but this year was late across much of the country. In and around Mogadishu they started only in the second week of May. Light to moderate rains have been received in most parts of Somalia with Gedo, Bay regions and limited areas in the north and central receiving good rains relatively. Pasture regeneration has been reported in rained areas and river levels (the Juba and Shabelle) started rising but still below normal. Livestock, particularly small ruminants, have died due to hypothermia mainly in pastoralist areas. Significant livestock movements started to areas with good rains while food supply at markets declined in the areas where roads have become impassible due to the rains. In the meantime, death of two children and an old woman of malnutrition are confirmed in Eldher village of Galgaduud region. However, the rainfall performance during the month of April **remained significantly below normal throughout the country**. Late commencement, erratic and unevenly distribution were the characters of *gu'* rains this year.

Acute watery diarrhea (AWD) outbreaks are reported from different parts of the country. Bay, Bakool, Gedo, Mudug and Galgaduud are the worst affected. Two teams from WHO are in the affected areas treating and to put the situation under control. Cholera outbreak is confirmed in the capital Mogadishu and death toll of about 70 is reported from the hospitals.

The long-awaited *gu'* rains started, but it was not good for the desperate IDPs in camps around the capital controlled by Alshabaab militia. Although they are very happy for the rains, they are complaining of cold, leakages and loss of shelters. More than half million HHs are living in poor shelters made of wood and cartons around Mogadishu.

Rainfall:

Normally *gu'* rains start in April and stop in June. Unlike normal, this year the *gu'* rains started in the second week of May across the country. According to FEWSNET light to moderate rains have been received in most parts of the country with Afmadow in lower Juba region receiving the highest amount of rainfall (58mm) then Dila of northern west region (38mm). The *gu'* performance is the poorest in Shabelle valley where there are areas still to get *gu'* rains. In general the *gu'* performance in April is very below normal throughout the country. The character of this *gu'* is late start, less intensive and unevenly distribution.

IDPs in the major three corridors of the capital are affected by the rains negatively. Although they are very delighted for the rains, they are suffering of cold, leakages and loss of shelters. Almost 480,200 HHs are living under the trees and poor shelters of cartons in Afgoye, Balaad and Dayniile corridors of Mogadishu.

Pasture and livestock health:

Pasture quality and availability improved in areas received moderate to good rains and very poor in areas where there is no rain. Water and pasture distance decreased in areas with rains and increased in expecting areas. Notable livestock migration started to areas with good rains and ruminants' death of hypothermia particularly in pastoralist areas is reported. No livestock disease out breaks is reported.

Human Health

Watery diarrhea outbreak is reported from across the country, Bay, Bakool, Gedo, Galgaduud and Mudug being the most affected. Cholera outbreak is confirmed in Mogadishu and Nearly 70 related deaths have been reported from Banadir Hospital during the same period. Two teams from WHO are operating in Bay, Bakool and Mudug, but the major problem is the vast areas controlled by Alshabaab where accessibility is the problem.

According to Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) and Somalia Water and Land Information Management (SWALIM) of FAO malnutrition rates remain some of the highest in the world, with 1 in 4 acutely malnourished in southern regions, which remain the most inaccessible for humanitarian agencies due to insecurity. Meanwhile, two children and an old woman have died of malnutrition in Eldher village of Galgaduud region. There are also malaria cases in the entire areas with rains.



Crop production

Although it's too early to tell the outcome of the current rains, predictions already point towards a below average cereal harvest for Somali farmers, who heavily depend on rainfall and river irrigation to grow staple cereals, namely maize and sorghum. The current long rains season is the most important season for cereal production and if these rains do not perform adequately, following the crop failure last season, prices will increase even higher, out of the reach of many. Levels of key rivers—Shabelle and Juba-- that benefit irrigated agriculture are currently far below their historical normal levels, mainly due to failure of rains in the Ethiopian highlands which feed the rivers.

Food Security Status

The food security status in the country is below normal. According to SWALIM of FOA and FSNAU cereal prices continue to increase, being up to 135% higher in March 2011 compared to March 2010 in parts of southern Somalia. With the absence of sufficient humanitarian assistance in the south due to the conflict, there are fears that these populations are likely to take the worst toll of the drought. Poor households are increasingly finding it difficult to afford basic necessities and are being forced to

migrate in search of food and income within Somalia and across international borders. However, given that the current drought is a regional phenomena, options may be limited. According to UN estimates the drought displaced some 50,000 Somalis within the country while combined with insecurity and poverty; it makes Somalia one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world.

Security

There is no security problem in Somaliland and Puntland although fight and skirmishes on land broke out between these two autonomous administrations recently. In the south security is bad though there is improvement in the capital. The frequency and scale of fighting in the capital decreased due to military defeats, disagreements and defections in Alshabaab. The retreat of Alshabaab militarily is will to continue after the death of Bin Laden, though disagreement between the speaker and the president of the TFG could be big blow for the government.

Recommendations:

- **Close monitoring of the situation:** rains are inadequate to date in all parts of the country and are leading to increased livestock deaths and increasing food and water prices, which are making it increasingly difficult for poor families to feed themselves. Country could slide into an even deeper crisis due to the combination of drought, skyrocketing food prices and constant population displacement from ongoing conflict. Therefore, close monitoring of the situation in Somalia is very important particularly during the coming three months.
- **Human health intervention:** AWD broke out across the country and cholera in the capital. Malnutrition which is the highest in the world particularly in the southern parts controlled by Alshabaab plus the common diseases of malaria and TB. Half million IDPs in camps in very poor situation. All above problems and ineffectiveness of the transitional federal government obligate the international community immediate intervention to save lives of many poor and desperate families.
- **Water:** rains below average means water shortage is still there and prices dramatically increasing. Water trucking and rehabilitation of water points are still the top priorities.
- **Emergency food distribution:** There is big gap in food security in Somalia currently. The malnutrition rates are the highest in the world according to FAO. Food prices are skyrocketing to the reach of poor families. Prediction of cereal harvest is very low through out the country. As a result, to mitigate the food insecurity emergency aid intervention is inevitable.