

Drought in Somalia

What are we waiting for?

Introduction

By the 15th of November 2016, the rains in Somalia were roughly 1 month late. The past two seasonal rains (Deyr 2015, Gu 2016) have varied regionally, however the general trend has been that the Deyr 2015 rains were strong, but ended a month early, leading to a longer dry season in early 2016. The Gu 2016 rains were strong in late April and early May, but ended abruptly causing crop failures in Southern-most regions. Evidence and feedback from the field show that the drought is wide-spread in Puntland, Somaliland, and most parts of the southern and central regions, including Hiraaan, Galgaduud, Gedo, Lower Shabele, Mudug and Jubaland.

Based on the recent seasonal assessment jointly led by the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit for Somalia (FSNAU, a project managed by the Food and Agriculture Organization), and the Famine Early Warning Systems Network, which was released in September, Poor Gu rainfall, locally significant floods, trade disruption, and new and continued population displacement contributed to a worsening of the food security situation in Somalia. As a result,

- 1096000 people face Crisis (IPC Phase 3)
- 43000 more people will be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4)
- 3.9 million people are classified as Stressed (IPC Phase 2)
- 5 Million people face acute food insecurity across Somalia

However the final quarter of 2016 has seen competing priorities mobilize the attention of the humanitarian community: elections, conflict in Galcackyo; withdrawal of the troops from more than 8 areas and the subsequent take-over of these locations by armed non-state actors; the conflict and displacement of population in Afgoye; and finally, the return process of the refugees from Daadab camp.

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Online Resources on Drought

FEWS NET

- Report: <http://www.fews.net/east-africa/somalia/seasonal-monitor/november-3-2016>
- [FEWSNET Somalia Food security Outlook October 2016- May 2017](#)
- [Consequences of drought in Somalia- UNOCHA HCT Report](#)

Radio Ergo October Media reports:

http://radioergo.org/en/blog.php?article_id=2490

http://radioergo.org/en/blog.php?article_id=2436

http://radioergo.org/en/blog.php?article_id=2488

http://radioergo.org/en/blog.php?article_id=2480

NGOs Call for Action as on 28th November 2016

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However, none of the above should hamper the capacity of the humanitarian sector to respond to the harsh impact of the long-lasting lack of access to water in rural areas.

Somalia went through a very similar situation in 2011 where two failed rain seasons, overlapping shocks, restricted action and a late response resulted in large-scale human catastrophe. Ever since, we have been repeatedly promising to not let this happen again. NOW is our opportunity to take action. NOW is the time to put into action our commitment to resilience and no regrets approaches. What are we waiting for?

It is our responsibility as donors, as implementers, as national and local authorities, as Somali business community and any other structure that has the capacity to provide help to step in immediately and provide assistance to the affected population and do their uttermost to see that this drought does not lead to a famine.

Update by Region

Gedo, Middle Juba and Lower Juba Regions: Severe drought in these regions has been compounded by election tensions and incursions by armed non-state actors. Appeals have been made by the District Commissioners of Belet Hawa and Dolo, while an inter-agency assessment for Gedo has shown a dire situation on the ground. While access in Lower and Middle Juba Regions restricts information, satellite-monitored rainfall trends show the regions to be the most worrying in all of Somalia. Various NGOs can confirm wide-spread water shortages along the Kenyan border and when spoken to some of the elders in the region they said that in their opinion *“the signs we are noting at the moment is what we have not seen in the past 30 years of our life.”*

Lower Shabelle Region: Late Gu 2016 rains caused major delays in planting, while the lack of subsequent rains caused many crops to fail. Only a weak “hagaa” rain in late June prevented a larger failure. Despite these losses, Lower Shabelle will still produce an estimated 48% of all cereal in Somalia. However the total volume of which is the lowest we have seen since 2012 when the area was still recovering from famine. This not only impacts area livelihoods and inputs for the now questionable Deyr season, but also food availability across Somalia. Further, it has been found that over 9,000 HHs have been newly affected by forced displacement by conflict between armed non-state actors and Biyomal Clan. This has resulted in an influx of IDPs to various Lower Shabelle locations, especially KM 50 and Afgoye Town.

In **Puntland:** Severe drought is directly affecting approximately 150,000 people and has displaced an additional 12,000 people, according to an inter-agency assessment conducted in September 2016

In **Somaliland** especially regions like **Sool, Sanaag and Togdheer** as Southern and Western regions of Somaliland continue – with the help of the international response – to pull themselves out their recent drought, conditions have greatly deteriorated in Sool, Sanaag and Togdheer.

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Bakool, Hiraan and Galgaduud Regions: The recent pull-out of Security troops in important locations such as Tayeeglo, Rabdhuure, Ceel Cali, Halgan, Moqokori and Galcad have caused immediate displacements for fear of other non-state actors reprisals. This has disrupted aid delivery to the areas, and has caused IDP influxes into Beled-Weyn, Xudur, Baidoa and Ceel Barde. Appeals have been seen from the District Commissioner of Tiyeeglow, while uncertainty in many other areas of Ethiopian presence disrupts business and is likely to prompt further migration. IDP caseloads in these areas are of utmost concern.

What can we do?

1. If you are a Donor - **Strongly encourage your implementing partners to re-programme their current activities** so as to provide life-saving support to the drought affected with a special focus on women and children and other marginalised people.
2. If you are an NGO - Consult with your donors to suggest **a rapid revision process of your projects to re-align your activities or areas of operation to provide assistance** to those who need it most at the present moment.
3. If you are a Humanitarian Coordinating Structure - Start engaging your members and other similar coordination forums to **gather and disseminate relevant information regarding the needs and the capacities, as well as mobilize your resources to address access challenges.**

This is therefore a call to all capable actors working with and for Somalia and beyond **to act now to avert any further crisis.**

The paper has been endorsed by the following 38 NGOs:

ACTED, ACTIONAID, ADESO, ADRA SOMALIA, AMERICAN REFUGEE COMMITTEE, BRCIS CONSORTIUM, CANDLELIGHT FOR ENVIRONMENT, CESVI, CISP, CONCERN WORLDWIDE, COOPERAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE, DANSIH REFUGEE COUNCIL, INTERNATIONAL AID SERVICES, INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY FOUNDATION, INTERSOS, ISLAMIC RELIEF WORLDWIDE, KAALO AID FOR DEVELOPMENT, MEDAIR, MERCY CORPS, MERCY USA FOR AID AND DEVELOPMENT, NOMADIC ASSISTANCE FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT, NORWEGIAN CHURCH AID, NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL, OXFAM, PHYSICIANS ACROSS CONTINENTS, RELIEF INTERNATIONAL, SECOURS ISLAMIC FRANCE, SOMALI RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT ACTION, SWISSO KALMO, THE ONE EARTH FUTURE FOUNDATION, TROCAIRE, VSF SUISSE, WASDA, WORLD CONCERN, WORLD RELIEF GERMANY, WORLD VISION SOMALIA.