

Key Overall Developments

Half the Somali population, 3.8 million people, are in need of livelihood and humanitarian support. This is an 18 percent increase from 3.2 million since January, according to the latest post *Gu* (rainy season April – June) assessments by the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU). In a press statement issued on 24 August, FSNAU also warned that a further deterioration in the humanitarian situation may occur if current fighting levels continue. Some 75 percent of the people in need are concentrated in South/Central Somalia, where most of the fighting is taking place, causing loss of life and livelihoods and impeding humanitarian access.

The epicentre of the drought crisis is in Mudug, Galgaduud, Hiraan and Bakool regions is caused by five consecutive seasons of drought. In these areas, 75 percent of the total population are classified as being in Humanitarian Emergency. There is also an alarming deterioration in the food and nutrition situation in the north due to an emerging drought after 2-3 consecutive seasons of below normal rainfall. An estimated 255,000 people are identified in Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis, while another 25,000 are in Humanitarian Emergency.

Malnutrition levels in several parts of the country have declined since January, and now 1 in 5 children are acutely malnourished, while 1 in 20 are severely malnourished. Earlier this year the numbers were 1 in six children. An estimated 285,000 children under 5 years are acutely malnourished, of which 70,000 are severely malnourished.

The overall *Gu* 2009 crop harvest was normal in the south, especially in Bay, Juba and Shabelle regions, however, the benefits of the harvest are not expected to reach the drought affected regions of Hiraan, Galgaduud, Mudug, Nugaal, Sool, Sanaag and Togdheer. According to a Food Security Alert issued on 27 August by the Famine Early Warning Systems Network, IDPs and neighbouring regions in the south will absorb the crop production surplus.

Civilians continue to be the victims of heavy fighting in Mogadishu. During the week, at least 50 people were killed with dozens more wounded in different incidents between government forces and insurgents. UNHCR says at least 87,000 people have been displaced across Somalia since 1 July; with an estimated 4,500 displaced during the week. Of the 87,000 displacements, 25,000 have moved to areas within Mogadishu and 47,000 displacements have moved out of the city (21,000 to Afgooye). Local NGOs are also being targeted by armed groups in Mogadishu; on 22 August, two offices were looted.

Response

In Puntland, WFP and partners reached some 7,700 people with food through a supplementary feeding programme, including 5,000 children in Burtinle and 458 participants of food for work programme in Lafagoray, over the last week. In Togdheer, Sool, Sanaag and Awdal in Somaliland, an additional 50,000 beneficiaries received 814 metric tons of assorted food commodities through targeted supplementary feeding programmes, Maternal Child Health centres, institutional feeding and general food distribution. Another distribution of food commodities through supplementary feeding programmes also took place in Lower Juba region reaching some 4,000 beneficiaries. Some 1,700 participants of food for work also received 174 metric tons of assorted food in Sakow, Middle Juba.

UNICEF and local partners started the distribution of UNIMIX (a high protein porridge-like food fortified with vitamins and minerals) in Afgooye district, including IDP camps along the Afgooye corridor reaching some 65,000 children between 6 months to 3 years of age.

On 25 August, the Danish Refugee Council distributed building materials to 180 fire-affected households to enable them re-build their accommodation in Bossaso, Puntland. At the same time, UNHCR distributed 180 non-food items – including a plastic sheet, 2 sleeping mats, 2 blankets, utensils and a jerry can to the families.

Water trucking activities benefiting at least 17,000 drought affected people are ongoing in Sool, Nugaal, and Sanaag and Karkar regions, supported by the Humanitarian Response Fund.

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