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REGIONAL DROUGHT RESPONSE PLAN

For the Horn of Africa

*Revised 2022 requirements for sustaining and scaling life-saving food
and nutrition assistance to meet deteriorating drought conditions.*

May – December 2022

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In January 2022, the World Food Programme (WFP) released a six-month Drought Response Plan for the Horn of Africa. This Plan outlined the critical humanitarian needs and WFP's accompanying relief requirements necessary to respond to the already severe drought. Now, in May 2022, the humanitarian situation has deteriorated so severely, that this Drought Response Plan has been updated to reflect the increased relief requirements, both in terms of more people in need and additional relief programmes. The revised Plan covers WFP's drought response from May until the end of the year and adds Djibouti's drought-related needs to the severely affected countries of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

These increased needs have been driven by a continued lack of adequate rains, record temperatures and severe underfunding of humanitarian appeals to date. **The number of food insecure driven by the drought has increased from some 12-13 million in January 2022 to over 15 million now in May. Moreover, should the current rains fail, and humanitarian relief is not rapidly increased, the number of food insecure could rise further to 20 million by the end of 2022.**

The nutrition status of the most vulnerable affected by drought has also continued to deteriorate. In Somalia, for example, Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates are at 'Emergency' levels in 45 out of 74 districts,¹ and 1.4 million children (near half of Somalia's under 5 population) are estimated to be suffering from acute malnutrition.² The drought and lack of adequate assistance is also fueling protection risks, particularly for girls and women, as families are displaced in search of food and water, children drop out of school (or schools close altogether), and negative coping strategies such as child marriage and transactional sex increase.

Despite these enormous humanitarian requirements, funding has not kept pace. **Less than 20 percent of what WFP required in January has so far been received and the needs have since dramatically escalated.** Accordingly, WFP is being forced to prioritize who receives assistance and who goes hungry. Indeed, resource shortfalls are so severe that WFP, in the midst of this devastating drought, has been forced to cut entire programmes. **In Somalia for example, despite the incredibly concerning nutrition situation, WFP has been forced to completely halt malnutrition prevention programmes so as to allocate existing resources solely to the treatment of malnutrition.**

WFP is already on the ground, providing millions of people with life-saving assistance every month. However, WFP needs financial support to ensure this work can continue. This document provides an overview of WFP's regional response to the drought and accompanying financial requirements throughout 2022. **WFP is urgently calling for USD 982 million to help avert a major humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa and support almost 7.8 million people affected by the drought.** These requirements are in line with the 2022 Somalia and Ethiopia Humanitarian Response Plans (HRP), as well as the Kenya Drought Flash Appeal. Responding now is necessary to prevent the depletion of productive assets, the dramatic worsening of food security, escalating levels of acute malnutrition and ultimately save lives. Only by addressing the multiple needs of boys, girls, men and women can the impacts of drought be effectively mitigated.



¹ Emergency/critical malnutrition levels are declared when global acute malnutrition (GAM) rates exceed 15 percent.

² OCHA, *Somalia Drought: Situation Report 4*, February 2022.

KEY NUMBERS & TARGETS

Drought in the Horn of Africa



Over 15 million people are now acutely food insecure across the Horn of Africa because of the drought, up from 12-13 million at the beginning of the year. Should the ongoing rains fail and increased relief assistance not take place, this number of acutely food insecure could rise to **20 million people by the end of the year**.



Some 7 million children are acutely malnourished in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia in 2022, including more than 1.7 million severely malnourished. In addition, **1.5 million pregnant and nursing women require nutritional support** to ensure the health of themselves and their children.



In Somalia, **almost 40 percent of the population are now facing acute food insecurity**. Moreover, some 81,000 people are facing catastrophic hunger (IPC 5) with a risk of famine. **The last famine in Somalia, in 2011, killed over a quarter of a million people.**

WFP Targets & Requirements



Resources permitting, WFP will support **7.8 million drought-affected people with life-saving assistance including 2.3 million vulnerable women and children with nutritional support every month**.



WFP needs **USD 982 million** to meet the urgent needs of crisis-affected families through the rest of the year in the four drought-affected countries of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.



WFP Djibouti needs USD 6.7 million to reach 34,000 people.



WFP Ethiopia needs USD 343.5 million to reach 3.7 million people.



WFP Kenya needs USD 148 million to reach 960,000 people.



WFP Somalia needs USD 484 million to reach 3.1 million people.

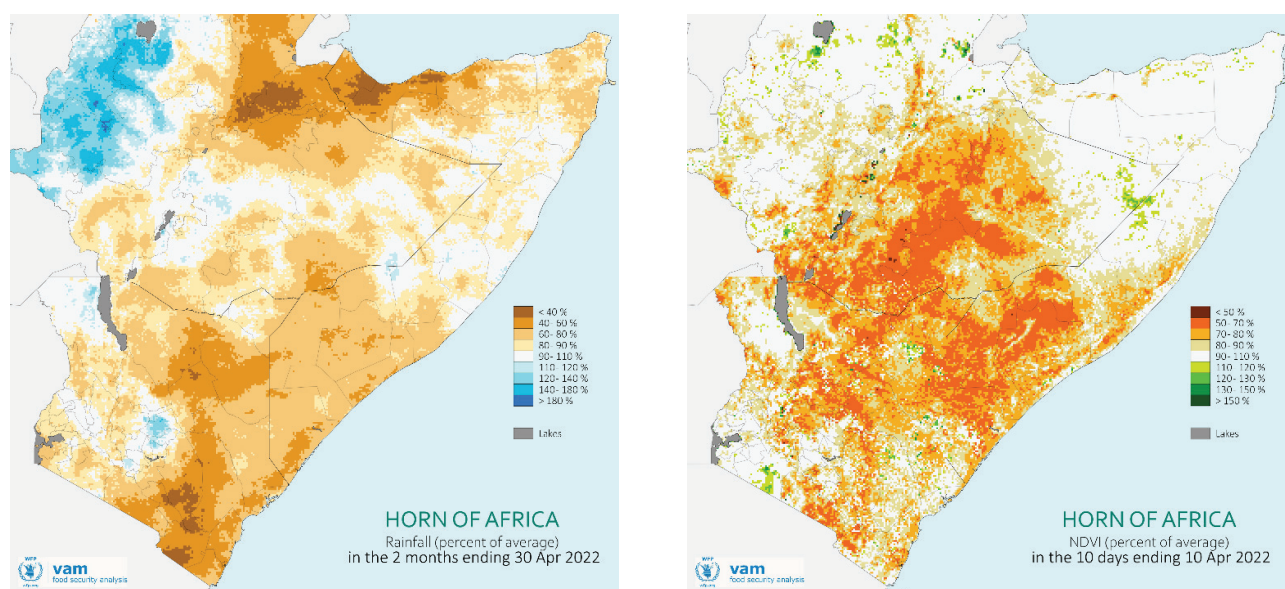


REGIONAL DROUGHT OVERVIEW

The ongoing drought is compounding the severity of acute food insecurity among pastoral and farming households in the Horn of Africa, many of whom have already experienced sustained reductions in food and income over the past growing seasons. Analysis by WFP's Research, Assessment and Monitoring (RAM) Unit indicates that over the last three growing seasons, large areas of the eastern Horn have experienced the driest conditions recorded since 1981.³ Similarly, WFP analysis found that the October-December 2021 season was also the hottest since 1981. High temperatures compound the effect of below-average rains by increasing evapotranspiration, deteriorating vegetation and soil moisture conditions, and depleting water resources needed by humans and livestock.

These abnormally dry and hot conditions have persisted into 2022. Figure 1 illustrates rainfall (left map) and vegetation conditions (right map) for March and early-April 2022. These indicate that while some rain has and is forecast to fall in April, providing a degree of relief from the drought, these rains are not yet sufficient to alleviate the severe drought conditions. Moreover, if the ongoing rain season is below-average, then it will be the fourth consecutive poor season since late 2020. This could lead to an unprecedented climate emergency in the region with yet greater food security implications.

Figure 1: Rainfall and vegetation anomalies in the Horn of Africa (March-April 2022)⁴



Key aspects of the drought for the WFP response are articulated below:

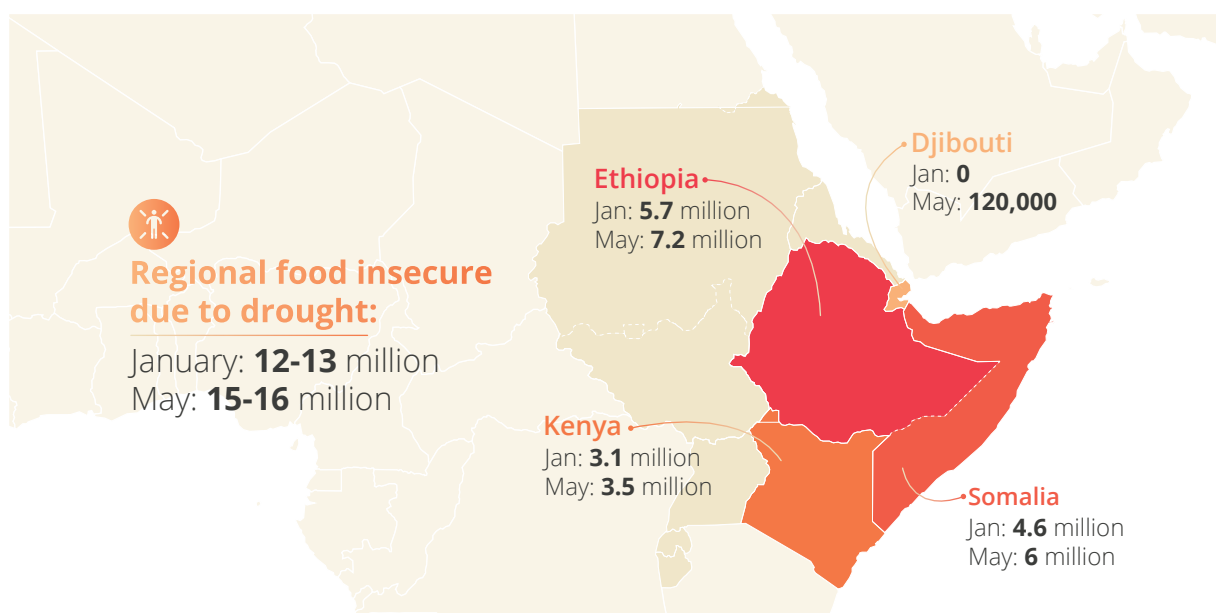
- Increasing number and severity of food insecure:** At least 15 million people are now estimated to be acutely food insecure across the Horn of Africa in May 2022 because of the drought. This is an increase from an estimated 12–13 million people in early 2022. Moreover, should the ongoing rains fail and increased relief assistance not take place, this number of acutely food insecure may increase to up to 20 million later in the year. The number of acutely food insecure in Somalia, for example, has increased from some 4 million in January to over 6 million people in April. This means that almost **40 percent of the Somali population are now acutely food insecure (IPC 3+)**,⁵ including 1.7 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and over 81,000 people facing Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5). **This is the highest number of people facing acute food insecurity in Somalia since IPC calculations began.** Figure 2 illustrates regional changes in food insecurity driven by drought since the beginning of the year.

³ WFP, *An Analysis of the Impacts of Ongoing Drought across the Eastern Horn of Africa*, 20 January 2022.

⁴ The left map illustrates the rainfall anomaly for March-April 2022 as a percentage variation against the long-term average (LTA). The right map shows vegetation quality through the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI), also illustrating percentage deviation against the LTA.

⁵ FSNAU, FEWS NET, *Somalia: IPC Acute Food Insecurity Update Snapshot March - June 2022*, April 2022.

Figure 2: Number of people acutely food insecure due to the drought (January vs May 2022)



- Deteriorating levels of malnutrition:** The number of malnourished women and children is skyrocketing in the region due to a lack of food, limited access to clean water, rising food prices and disease. An estimated **Some 7 million children are acutely malnourished in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia as of April 2022**, including more than 1.7 million severely acutely malnourished (SAM).⁶ Moreover, maternal malnutrition is at a critical level with **over 1.5 million pregnant and nursing women (PNW) requiring nutritional support**. With these numbers and the currently insufficient response, there is a risk of unprecedented levels of mortality. It is therefore essential to increase nutrition services and food support to avert crisis now. Acutely malnourished children have a 7 to 10 times higher likelihood of death and must be prioritized.⁷ These increasing malnutrition levels can be seen in Kenya, for example, where the number of children under the age of five requiring treatment for acute malnutrition has risen by 16 percent from 653,000 to 755,000 between August 2021 and February 2022.⁸ During the same period, acute malnutrition rates in PNW increased by 7 percent. The same trend is seen across Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia with the number of people requiring support greatly outstripping humanitarian resources.
- Increasing inflation and decreasing household purchasing power:** Household purchasing power among agro-pastoralists is rapidly declining due to the reduction of key income sources (produce and livestock) coupled with sharp increases in domestic and imported cereal prices. In affected areas of Kenya and Ethiopia, estimates indicate the January/February 2022 cereal harvests were 60-70 percent below average. Meanwhile, in Somalia, staple cereal prices are more than 75 percent higher than those observed at the start of the 2016/2017 drought.⁹ Already limited household purchasing power is expected to further decline as local cereal stocks diminish, livestock health deteriorates, and imported food prices continue to rise due to global supply chain constraints.
- Displacement:** The drought has driven large numbers of people from their homes in search of food, water, humanitarian relief and essential services.¹⁰ In Somalia, for example, well over 500,000 people were internally displaced by drought in the first quarter of 2022 alone.¹¹ Moreover, according to projections by the International Office for Migration (IOM), it is estimated that up to 1.4 million could become displaced this year in Somalia alone because of the drought. In Ethiopia, IOM has recorded over 300,000 people displaced so far by drought, though the actual number is believed to be far higher. Such internal displacement increases the risk of communities competing over scarce resources and exposes women, children and the elderly to elevated protection risks.

⁶ UNICEF, *At least 10 million children face severe drought in the Horn of Africa*, April 2022.

⁷ Olofin I, et al. *Associations of suboptimal growth with all-cause and cause-specific mortality in children under five years: a pooled analysis of ten prospective studies*. PLoS ONE, 2013

⁸ FEWS NET, *Kenya: IPC Food Security & Nutrition Snapshot*, March 2022.

⁹ IGAD, EC, FAO, FEWS NET, WFP. *The Eastern Horn of Africa Faces an Exceptional Prolonged and Persistent Agro-pastoral Drought Sequence*, December 2021.

¹⁰ OCHA, *Ethiopia Humanitarian Bulletin*, 17 January 2022.

¹¹ UNHCR, *Protection and Returns Monitoring Network (PRMN)*, April 2022.

- **Weakening livestock conditions:** In pastoral zones, household food and income sources have been significantly reduced due to substantial declines in livestock herd sizes, body conditions and milk production. For example, in Kenya, livestock are trekking nearly double the normal 6 km to reach water points¹² while 15 counties have reported almost 1.5 million livestock deaths because of the drought.¹³ In Ethiopia, another 1.5 million livestock have so far died due to lack of pasture and water.¹⁴ Moreover, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), an additional 10 million livestock are at risk across affected areas. Livestock are increasingly emaciated, leading to decreased reproduction, atypically high deaths, and increased distress sales. Assessments in Ethiopia and Somalia indicate that most pastoral households are entering the 2022 dry season with fewer livestock than they had before the peak of the 2016/2017 drought.¹⁵
- **Education:** Hunger affects children's concentration and ability to learn. Moreover, in times of drought, many children are unable to go to school because their families need them to help bring in income or perform domestic duties. The impact is already evident in the region. For example, in Ethiopia due to the drought, more than 382,000 students in the Somali Region and 56,000 students in the Oromia Region have been missing school, either due to school closures or because their families need them to help generate income or care for their livestock during this critical time.¹⁶ The total number of children out of school across Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia is concerning high at 15 million. An additional 1.1 million children are at risk of dropping out with thousands of schools already lacking access to water.¹⁷
- **Compounding shocks:** Drought is not impacting food security in a vacuum. Rather, drought is compounding existing vulnerabilities driven by chronic poverty and multiple man-made and climatic shocks. For example, in Somalia, some areas currently affected by drought, are also experiencing prolonged conflict and instability, the continued impact of desert locusts from previous years, and abnormally high food prices.¹⁸ The situation has been compounded by the fallout of conflict in Ukraine, with the cost of food and fuel soaring to unprecedented highs. The cost of a food basket has already risen, particularly in Ethiopia (66 percent) and Somalia (36 percent) which depend heavily on wheat from Black Sea basin countries.¹⁹ Evidence indicates that such shocks interact, increasing food insecurity. For example, drought and climatic shocks are increasingly understood as a major driver of conflict in Somalia as dwindling natural resources exacerbate clan divisions and inter-clan conflict.²⁰

Accordingly, large-scale emergency food, nutrition, school feeding, livelihoods assistance and logistical support is urgently needed across the Horn of Africa. This is required to prevent high food consumption deficits, associated levels of acute malnutrition and protect the livelihoods and productive assets of drought-affected families.

12 WFP, *An Analysis of the Impacts of Ongoing Drought across the Eastern Horn of Africa*, 20 January 2022.

13 FEWS NET et al, *2021 Kenya Short Rains mid-Season Food and Nutrition Security Situation Update*, December 2021.

14 OCHA, *Ethiopia: Drought Key Messages*, April 2022.

15 FEWS NET, *East Africa Food Security Alert*, December 2021.

16 WFP, *Ethiopia Drought Response Situation Report #2*, April 2022.

17 UNICEF, *At least 10 million children face severe drought in the Horn of Africa*, April 2022.

18 FEWS NET et al, *2021 Kenya Short Rains mid-Season Food and Nutrition Security Situation Update*, December 2021.

19 WFP, *Implications of the Conflict in Ukraine on Food Access and Availability in the East Africa Region*, March 2022.

20 WFP, *An Analysis of the Impacts of Ongoing Drought across the Eastern Horn of Africa*, 20 January 2022.

WFP DROUGHT RESPONSE

This section outlines WFP's humanitarian response in each of the drought-affected countries of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. Each country analysis covers three sections: 1) a brief overview of national drought conditions, 2) WFP's programmatic response, and 3) the associated financial requirements.



1. Djibouti

1.1. Drought Overview:

On the 13 February 2022, the Government of Djibouti issued a drought alert, citing critically low groundwater levels and deteriorated vegetation and pasture conditions. These drought conditions have led to a significant deterioration in food security, reduced availability of pasture, rural-urban migration and a depletion of assets. According to a WFP Food Security and Nutrition Survey conducted in February 2022, **124,000 people are currently food insecure** due to high food prices, prolonged cessation of informal employment and the permanent loss of jobs due to COVID-19, compounded by drought and cyclical climatic shocks. 37 percent of the rural population and 10 percent of the urban population are either moderately or severely food insecure. For rural areas, this is an increase of 10 percent compared to January 2020. Countrywide, the prevalence of MAM for children under 2 is at 8 percent while the GAM rate is as high as 13 percent. Without urgent action now in areas severely affected by the drought, it is projected that up to 192,000 people, (some 16 percent of the Djiboutian population), will be in IPC phases 3 and 4 from July 2022.

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