

SOMALIA

Gu season floods

Crisis Impact Overview

- Heavy rains since the *Gu* season's start in early April have affected more than 612,000 people across Somalia, in Bari, Togdheer, Mudug, Hiraan, Middle and Lower Shabelle, Bakool, Gedo, Middle Juba, and Lower Juba (OCHA 12/5/2020). Flash floods in northern Somalia and riverine flooding in the southern Juba and Shabelle river basins have displaced 217,000 people and killed 16 (OCHA Update 11/5/2020). 115,000 people have been displaced in Belet Weyne town and nearby villages (Hiraan) alone, the most affected area (OCHA Update 11/5/2020).
- Displacement continues as river water levels rise and risk further flooding in the Juba and Shabelle river basins (OCHA 11/5/2020). Since the start of the season the rivers have seen higher than average depths compared with last year and long-term means (SWALIM 11/5/2020).
- Although 157,000 people have received aid across the country since flooding began, shelter and NFI, food and nutrition, WASH, and protection needs have been reported, particularly among flood-displaced populations (OCHA 11/5/2020). Somalia's pre-existing 2.2 million IDPs (UNHCR 9/4/2020) are also vulnerable, as many live in crowded, makeshift conditions with limited capacity to withstand flooding's impact and limited access to clean water and soap to prevent infectious diseases' spread (VOA 9/5/2020). They may lack financial flexibility and may be especially vulnerable to losses in livelihoods resulting from flooding.
- Flooding has damaged crops. A new generation of desert locust resulting from the rainfall conditions would likely encourage future losses in livelihoods, food shortages, and increase food prices.

Key priorities



217,000
displaced people



Risk
of AWD/cholera outbreak

National response capacity

Local NGOs, State government ministries (Health), State flood taskforces, Somalia Water and Land Information Management (SWALIM)

International response capacity

UN agencies (UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, IOM, WHO) INGOs, Cluster responses (OCHA 03/2020)

Anticipated scope and scale

- Rainfall is expected to reduce (SWALIM 11/5/2020) although flooding is projected to continue into mid-May in the Shabelle and Juba river basins (SWALIM 11/5/2020), threatening riverine and urban populations. Many have been forced to leave their areas in anticipation of the rivers overflowing (OCHA 11/5/2020). River breakages are reported, potentially exacerbating flooding.
- Flooding may damage crops and pasture, affecting harvests and livestock availability. Flooding may encourage locust breeding. These factors may result in heightened prices and hindered livelihoods, exacerbating food insecurity.



Humanitarian constraints

- Food convoys in Bay, Bakool, and Gedo have been prevented from moving due to impassable mud or flooded roads. Roads are also cut off along the Juba River, and in Mudug and Bari regions (OCHA 11/5/2020). 28 districts are difficult or impossible to access because of this (OCHA Access Snapshot 11/5/2020).
- Insecurity caused by ongoing conflict in Somalia's southern regions (FSNAU 9/5/2020) is likely to hamper humanitarian access and affected people's access to aid; additionally, humanitarians are frequently targeted in the country (OCHA Access Snapshot 11/5/2020).

Sectoral needs



Shelter and NFIs

- Reports in Johar district in Lower Shabelle indicate that homes have been damaged, likely to be wider issue (OCHA 11/5/2020). Provision of shelter and NFI supplies have been identified as priorities (OCHA 11/5/2020)



WASH

- Boreholes and wells have been reported damaged or contaminated in Bari and in Jubaland state (OCHA 11/5/2020). The displaced in Hiraan and Galmudug have reported WASH needs. These are likely to be wider issues. (OCHA 11/5/2020)



Health

- Health and nutrition needs have been reported by displaced people. (OCHA 11/5/2020) AWD/Cholera risks spreading; 90 cases were reported in Jubaland (OCHA 12/5/2020). There is a risk COVID-19 will spread in a country with a weak healthcare system, as populations lack clean water sources to practice good hygiene especially in flooded areas (VOA 9/5/2020) (WASH Cluster 30/4/2020).



Food and livelihoods

- Flooding along the Dawa River in Jubaland, and along the Shabelle River, damaged up to 1,100 hectares of cash and food crops. This is likely to increase food prices, challenging for affected populations who may not be able to pay increased prices (SWALIM 11/5/2020) (OCHA 11/5/2020).
- Reports in Johar district in Lower Shabelle indicate agricultural infrastructure including canals and river gates have been damaged hindering livelihoods when people return to their home areas after flooding ends (OCHA 11/5/2020). The displaced in Hiraan region and in Galmudug have reported food needs, needs that may be wider spread. (OCHA 11/5/2020)



Protection

- Displaced populations have reported protection needs. (OCHA 11/5/2020). Ongoing conflict in the country's southern regions may threaten displaced populations' security (AA 8/5/2020).

Aggravating factors

COVID-19: Somalia has seen a rapid increase in COVID-19 cases since mid-April (WFP 8/5/2020) with 1,089 currently confirmed cases and 52 deaths related to COVID-19 (last accessed 12/5/2020 Our World in Data). COVID-19 responses may be disrupted by damaged or flooded roads; it is also likely that there will be a lack of clean water supplies preventing good hygiene practices, notably in crowded conditions in IDP settlements, potentially exacerbating the spread of COVID-19 (OCHA 11/5/2020). Displacement may also spread the virus. There is a fear that a focus on COVID-19 responses may also divert attention away from other health needs in a country with limited health care capacity, including those needs resulting from floods (MSF 13/5/2020). Additionally, COVID-19 containment measures have led to unemployment (VOA 9/5/2020) and are also projected to lead to increased food prices as trade is hampered; disrupted remittance flows may also prevent people from receiving a vital source of income (FSNAU 9/5/2020) all factors which may further strain the financial capacities of populations affected by flooding.

Desert locust infestation: Somalia is currently experiencing the worst desert locust infestation in the last 25 years. Higher than average precipitation could create ideal conditions for the development of a third generation of desert locust infestation in the country (OCHA 5/4/2020); the two previous generations have already led to 36-50% yield decreases, although these have been limited and localized (Join Locust Needs Assessment 4/2020). Existing desert locusts pose a threat to Gu season crop production and may lead to 15-25% yield decreases compared to previous yearly averages, despite abundant rainfall – compounding lost livelihoods and less food sources (FSNAU 9/5/2020).

Food Insecurity and malnutrition: IPC projections for April-June 2020 indicate that 1.3 million people face Crisis (IPC-3) or Emergency (IPC-4) food insecurity, likely to heighten as crop damage and lost livelihoods from locusts and flooding become more apparent. Food insecurity may increase malnutrition rates: admissions for acute severe malnutrition from January to March 2020 rose 13% compared to 2016-2019 first quarter averages, due to lessened food production and to sporadic outbreaks of AWD/cholera and measles (FSNAU 9/5/2020). This is coupled with consistently high rates of global acute malnutrition (over three seasons) (FSNAU 9/5/2020). Alongside crop damage, rains are expected to trigger a spike in the number of cases of diarrhoea and cholera due to poor sanitation and inadequate health services across the country (OCHA 5/4/2020). Diarrhoea and Cholera may exacerbate malnutrition, by making it difficult to treat (WASH Cluster 21/4/2017).

Impact of the flooding in Somalia, as of 11 May

Source: OCHA (11/5/2020)

