

# ETHIOPIA

## Key drought developments to watch in Afar, SNNP, Somali, and southern and eastern Oromia regions

### OVERVIEW

Since 2020, prolonged drought resulting from consecutive failed rainy seasons has continued to affect northern, southeastern, and southern parts of Ethiopia, including Afar, southern and eastern Oromia, Somali, and Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region (SNNP). A fifth below-average rainy season was recorded in late 2022 (OCHA 10/03/2023, 18/01/2023, 07/02/2022, 08/09/2022, and 29/11/2022; WFP 23/01/2023; STC 13/01/2023).

The current drought has affected approximately 24 million people, including more than 11 million people who are in need of food assistance, the majority being in Afar, Oromia, SNNP, and Somali (WFP 23/01/2023; OCHA 04/04/2023, 08/09/2022, 07/02/2022, and 21/09/2022).

### ABOUT THIS REPORT

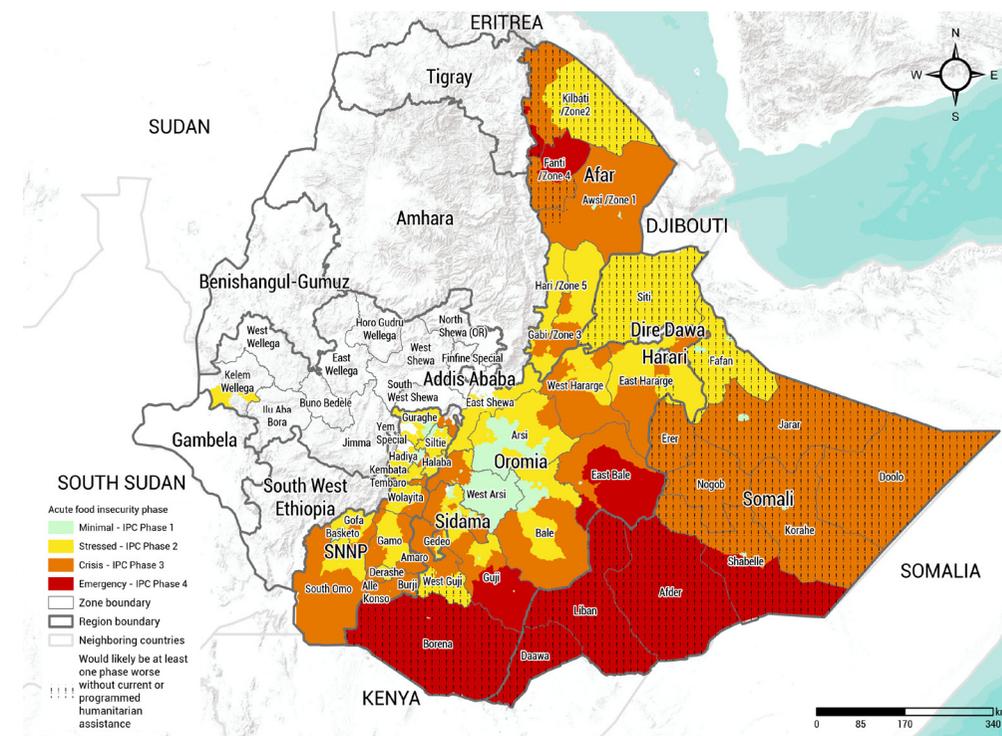
**Aim:** this report provides an overview of current drought conditions in Ethiopia's most affected regions, as well as an outlook on expected deteriorations for the remainder of 2023. It aims at presenting the factors that are likely to worsen the drought and its impact and at anticipating humanitarian impacts to support humanitarian planning and programming.

**Geographical scope:** the report covers Afar, SNNP, Somali, and southern and eastern Oromia. These regions were selected based on contextual knowledge, a close monitoring of the situation since 2021, and the available information at the time of compilation.

**Methodology:** this report is based on the secondary data review of publicly available sources between December 2022 and April 2023. To determine the crisis outlook, ACAPS collected existing information, mapped out relevant variables and triggers of crises, and highlighted their probable developments over the next months, anticipating how such developments could drive humanitarian needs.

**Limitations:** the outlook section highlights potential deteriorations based on information available as at April 2023. The emergence of new information, as well as the confluence of factors not accounted for, may invalidate the outlooks.

### Food insecurity in Afar, SNNP, Somali, and southern and eastern Oromia regions



**Source:** ACAPS using data from FEWS NET accessed 14/04/2023 and OCHA accessed 14/04/2023.

**Disclaimer:** the boundaries, names, and designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by ACAPS. Locations, including towns displayed, were selected based on relevance to this report.

See full and more detailed map on page 9.

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## KEY MESSAGES

### Drought is likely to persist in 2023

- Afar, SNNP, Somali, and southern and eastern Oromia are expected to face a further worsening of current drought conditions. The current rainy season is anticipated to continue in some drought-affected areas, but with below-average rains in southern Ethiopia for the remainder of the season (WFP 04/2023).
- The March–May rains contribute to about 60% of the annual rainfall in the equatorial parts of the Horn of Africa (IGAD 22/02/2023; The EastAfrican 23/02/2023; ICPAC accessed 14/04/2023). Given that previous rainy seasons have been below average, the current rainy season that has been below average in some drought-affected areas will have dire consequences for the planting seasons and for water sources, particularly in southern pastoral areas of Ethiopia (ICPAC accessed 14/04/2023).

### Flooding and El Niño are likely to compound the impact of drought

- Flooding in parts of Oromia and Somali regions has damaged and caused losses of land and property. It has also decreased the moisture levels of soil necessary to grow vegetation (OCHA 03/04/2023; Int'l Charter/UNOSAT 28/03/2023; ICPAC accessed 14/04/2023).
- Flooding in some drought-affected areas has contributed to a rapid spread of cholera cases, particularly in IDP sites lacking WASH services (OCHA 03/04/2023).
- The anticipated return of El Niño conditions in 2023 is projected to bring above-average temperatures, worsen the current drought, and trigger more extreme weather events (WMO 22/02/2023; Climate Centre 01/03/2023).
- The sighting of desert locusts in Tigray signifies the risk of their reoccurrence and reproduction in lowland desert areas, particularly as rains create a favourable breeding ground for infestation (Addis Standard 24/03/2023 and 20/01/2020).

### The drought will likely continue to affect agriculture and pastoralist livelihoods

- Poor or failed crop conditions are expected in southern and southeastern pastoral areas of Ethiopia because of below-average rains and the erosion of fertile lands resulting from floods.
- Prospects for the recovery of households, even in the event of better rainfall in late 2023 or early 2024, remain limited, in particular for pastoral households, given the large-scale loss of about 6.8 million livestock between October 2021 and early 2023 (OCHA 28/02/2023; IOM 30/03/2023).

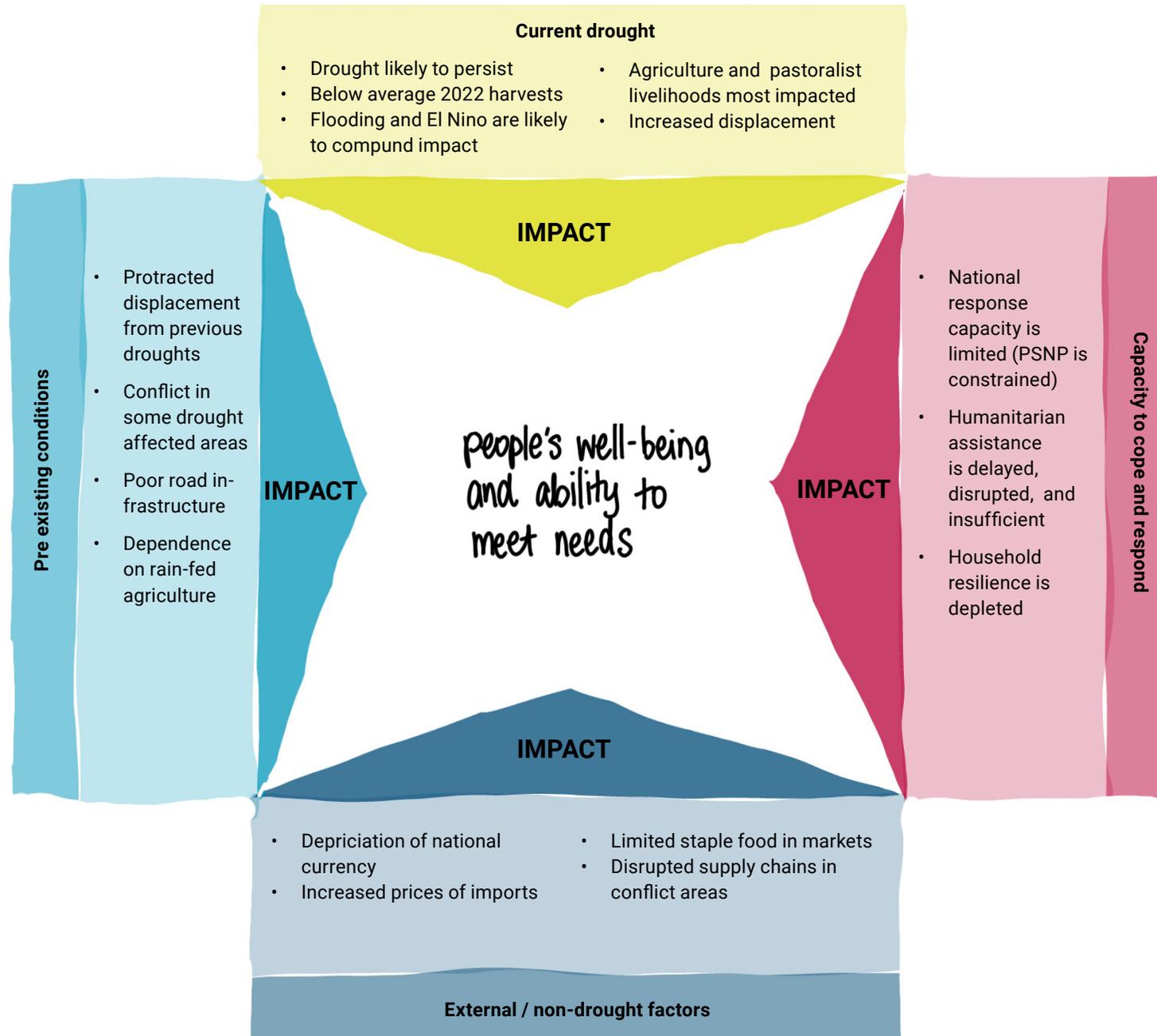
### Key humanitarian impacts in the coming months

- Below-average 2022 harvests are leading to a quick depletion of food reserves, making households more dependent on markets. Considering the increase in food prices, access to food for many households in drought-affected areas is expected to continue to be limited.
- Increased food insecurity and malnutrition are anticipated with the reduced availability of and access to market foods and humanitarian aid.
- High humanitarian needs are expected to persist if delays in humanitarian food distribution and limited Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) cash transfers persist.
- Drought-induced displacement of thousands of people is expected to continue in the coming months. Displacement is also expected to become protracted given the prolonged drought, limited humanitarian assistance, and the depletion of assets and livelihoods.

## INFORMATION GAPS

- There is no comprehensive IPC data on food insecurity, leading to difficulties in understanding the true scale and severity of food insecurity. FEWSNET data referenced in this report is IPC-compatible but may not reflect the consensus of national food security actors.
- A lot of the available figures on people in need are from mid-2022, and these numbers may have changed as at April 2023.
- The latest available displacement figures from August–September 2022 are outdated and may underestimate the scale of drought-induced displacement.
- Since 2020, there has been no updated information on households targeted for the PSNP, making it difficult to understand its scope and scale.

# DROUGHT RESILIENCE



Source: FEWS NET 27/10/2022; FEWS NET 01/04/2022; FEWS NET 28/02/2023; FAO 06/03/2023

Disclaimer: the visual does not aim to be comprehensive, but to highlight key factors addressed in the report.

## DROUGHT IMPACT

The prolonged drought has left about 13 million people in need of WASH assistance, including 8.2 million people who do not have access to sufficient potable water, as existing water sources have either dried up or are of poor quality (OCHA 08/09/2022 and 21/09/2022). As at June 2022, education for over 1.1 million children was also disrupted, including for more than 480,000 currently-out-of-school children in Afar, Oromia, Sidama, SNNP, Somali, and South West Ethiopia Peoples' region, as more than 1,700 schools closed because of drought and families migrated to access water and food (OCHA 08/09/2022).

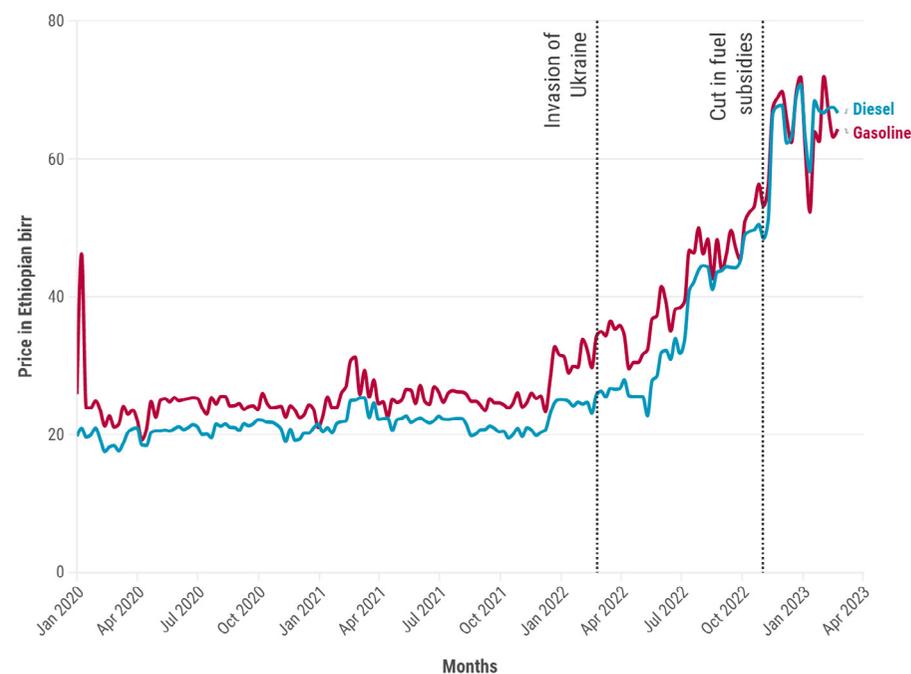
**The impact of drought on pastoral livelihoods has been dire.** The lack of pasture has resulted in approximately 6.8 million livestock deaths since October 2021 in Oromia, SNNP, and Somali, disrupting the main livelihood and food source for drought-affected communities dependent on pastoralism (WFP 04/2023; OCHA 28/02/2023, 07/02/2022, and 05/01/2023; FAO 04/01/2023; IOM 30/03/2023). Poor livestock body conditions have also reduced milk production, which is a vital source for child nutrition, and reduced the selling value of livestock. Livestock demand has also decreased amid low market supply and reduced household herd sizes, resulting in fewer sales. Income for livestock-dependent households has declined significantly, affecting their ability to purchase other food items (FEWS NET 27/10/2022; 01/04/2022, and 28/02/2023; OCHA 08/09/2022 and 07/02/2022).

**Ethiopia depends on rain-fed agriculture, making the country particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change and climate shocks.** Agriculture accounts for about 37% of the gross domestic product, 80% of exports, and 85% of employment in the country (USAID accessed 14/04/2023; WB accessed 14/04/2023; FAO accessed 13/03/2023). Small-scale subsistence farming, which is mainly rain-fed, accounts for about 95% of agricultural production in the country, with the majority of the plots being smaller than half an acre, which is insufficient to sustain household food security and generate income (FAO accessed 14/04/2023; WB 2021). With the continued increase in yearly average temperatures, which have risen at a pace of 0.25° C each decade since 1960, and the reduction in average annual rainfall, drought effects are expected to intensify, leading to crop failures, further losses in arable land, and desertification, significantly affecting household food production and pasture for livestock (WB 2021; EC accessed 14/04/2023; FAO 06/03/2023 and 10/02/2023).

**Increased food prices have reduced people's access to and the availability of food items in the market, particularly in drought- and conflict-affected areas.** The country's high reliance on wheat imports from Russia, Ukraine, and the US and rice imports from India and Pakistan has exposed it to the spike in global food prices triggered by geopolitical and climate crises in 2022 (FEWS NET 01/04/2022). Food prices reached near-record levels in January 2023. The skyrocketing of prices can be attributed to the continuous depreciation of the national currency, which has increased the prices of imported fuel, inputs, and food items like rice, pasta, and cooking oil, and to disruptions in supply chains in conflict-affected areas (FEWS

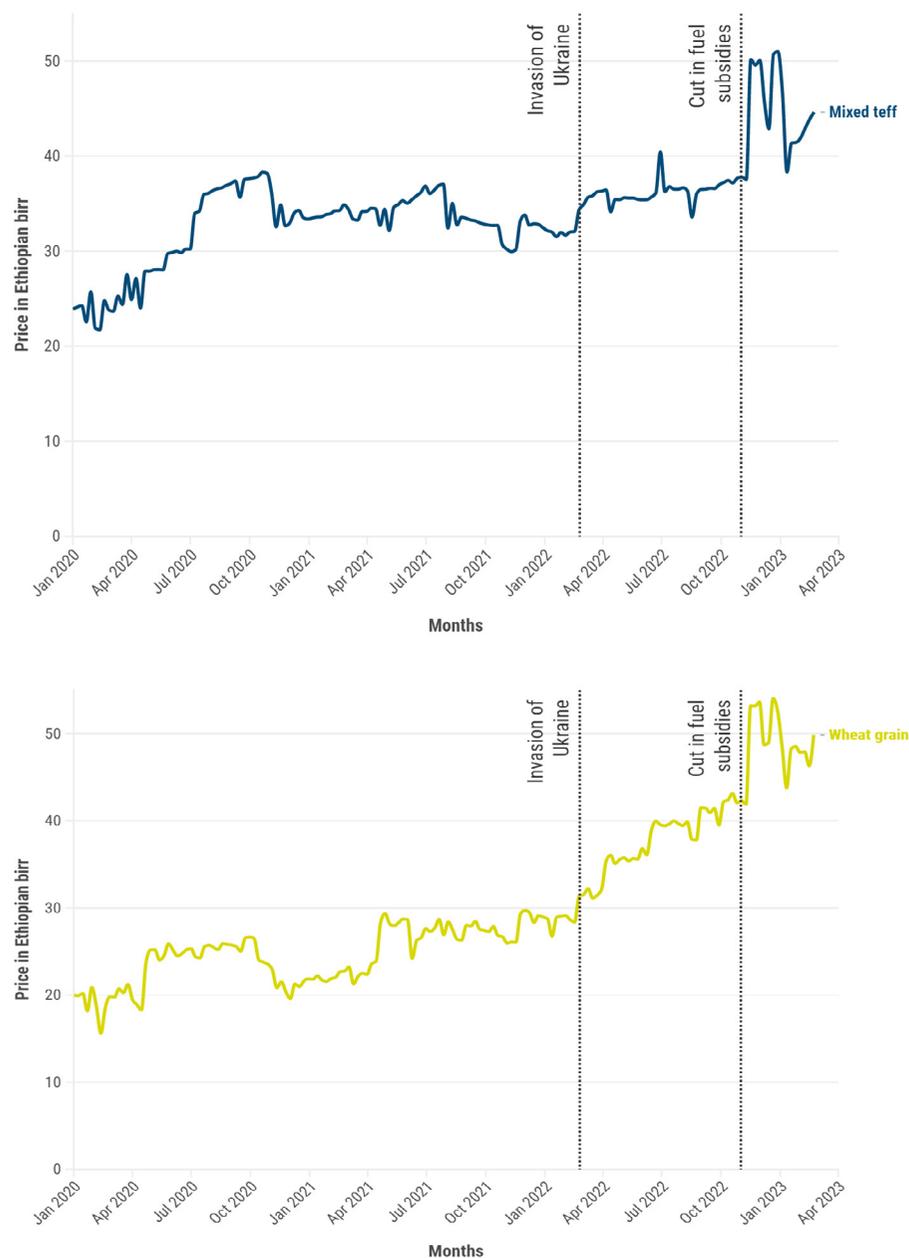
NET 28/02/2023; FAO 06/03/2023). Throughout 2022 and early 2023, the prices of staple foods in the western producing areas of Amhara, Oromia, SNNP, and Tigray unusually increased given below-average supply amid high demand, with prices in drought- and conflict-affected areas being relatively higher (FEWS NET 01/04/2022, 21/10/2022 and 28/02/2023; FAO 06/03/2023). There is also a limited supply of staple foods in markets because of below-average production and the low volume of food imports, affecting households' access to and the availability of foods across the country (FEWS NET 21/10/2022).

## Fuel prices



Source: OCHA accessed 14/04/2023

## Prices of staple foods



Source: OCHA accessed 14/04/2023

**The combination of agriculture and livelihood losses and food price increases has resulted in a rise in food insecurity and malnutrition levels.** As at September 2022, humanitarian assistance provided support for the prevention and treatment of malnutrition for about 3.8 million people, 2.9 million of whom were children under five or pregnant and lactating women (OCHA 08/09/2022; WFP 23/01/2023). As at October 2022, Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food insecurity levels existed in the drought-affected areas (FEWS NET 27/10/2022; OCHA 07/02/2022).

**The national capacity to respond to the drought through food and cash support has been limited.** The PSNP has been severely constrained since 2020 following the outbreak of the northern Ethiopia conflict (TNH 17/08/2022). The Government launched the PSNP in 2005 to respond to chronic food shortages and enhance household and community resilience to shocks. The programme provides cash or food transfers in the form of public works to households facing chronic food insecurity and to woredas facing high climate risk exposure, including Afar, Amhara, Dire Dawa, Harari, Oromia, SNNP, Somali, and Tigray (RI 09/12/2022; FAO 07/2022; TNH 17/08/2022; USAID 15/03/2023; WFP 16/01/2023; SPEC 11/02/2021). As at 2020, the PSNP had cumulatively assisted about eight million people, with another nine million set to benefit for another five years through financing that the Government and its partners committed to in 2021 (WFP 16/01/2023). It is unclear whether funding has been secured and how many people have been assisted since 2021. While a comprehensive figure of those assisted through the PSNP in 2022 is lacking, initial estimates indicate that the programme is not responding at scale and is often delayed (USAID 15/03/2023; UNICEF 24/12/2022; TNH 17/08/2022). Budget allocations for the PSNP have also decreased, limiting the number of people targeted for assistance (TNH 17/08/2022; Mulugeta et al. 11/2022). In Somali region, cash transfers through the PSNP have often been delayed and insufficient for households to purchase the 15kg of grain a month required to meet food needs considering price inflation (TNH 17/08/2022). In Afar, conflict has been severely disrupting the distribution of food and cash transfers from the PSNP since 2020 (FEWS NET 02/2022). It is unclear whether the PSNP has resumed in Afar as at early 2023.

**While the PSNP has helped lessen the impact of climatic shocks, its achievements in building assets are limited and would require operational markets for cash transfers to be effective.** Impact studies on the PSNP's effectiveness showed that it protected household assets, was quick in shock absorption, reduced the risk of food insecurity resulting from drought, decreased crop losses, and increased food consumption in terms of quantity and diversity. The studies also concluded that good practices from the programme could be replicated for resilience-building (FAO 07/2022; Mulugeta et al. 11/2022; Terecha 2021). On the other hand, cash transfers are susceptible to price inflation, which would then undermine people's purchasing power and the impact of cash transfers on food security (FAO 07/2022; TNH 17/08/2022). According to some studies, the PSNP has been unsuccessful at sustainably building household assets or increasing livestock accumulation, and the programme has been unable to achieve poverty reduction (FAO 07/2022; Mulugeta et al. 11/2022). As PSNP cash



transfers have been found to be the most effective when implemented in operational markets, the absence of such markets in drought-affected areas because of conflict, coupled with the inadequate supply of food resulting from below-average national production and the low volume of food imports, diminishes the efficacy of the PSNP in mitigating the impacts of drought (OCHA 28/02/2023; FEWS NET 27/10/2022).

**Humanitarian assistance has remained intermittent and insufficient.** As at the end of January 2023, 16.3 million people had received food aid in targeted areas across the country. In some areas, food distributions that started in 2022 are still continuing, with major delays and disruptions being reported particularly in conflict-affected areas. More than 20 million people are targeted for food assistance in areas affected by drought and conflict and in areas with increased food prices, but the numbers of those being reached remains below those targeted (OCHA 20/03/2023). Food distributions meant to be done every six weeks are also being done after every eight weeks or longer. This has left households stretching their rations (FEWS NET 27/10/2022).

**The displacement and migration of livestock from drought areas given a lack of food, water, and pasture have been persistent.** As at September 2022, more than 516,000 people were reported to be displaced because of the drought across the country, mainly in Afar, Oromia, and Somali regions (IOM 11/11/2022 and 27/12/2022; OCHA 28/02/2023). Many of the people displaced by previous droughts have remained in a status of protracted displacement, relying on humanitarian aid for survival, but this has also become limited as conflicts increased (IDMC 12/2019). As at the end of February 2023, about 400,000 people displaced because of the drought in southern Oromia were living in informal settlements, especially households from Arero, Elwaya, Moyale, and Teltale woredas in southern Oromia (Shelter Cluster et al. 22/03/2023). In Somali region, more than 340,000 people are still displaced because of the current drought. The situation is also likely to worsen, as several zones are currently experiencing the dry season, which is when water shortages are usually reported (Shelter Cluster et al. 22/03/2023; IOM 27/12/2022). Conflict in drought-affected areas has further increased displacement, particularly in rural areas of Guji and West Guji in southern Oromia, parts of Somali, and SNNP (OCHA 21/09/2022; IOM accessed 14/04/2023; IOM 27/12/2022; RVI 04/01/2022).

## MOST DROUGHT-AFFECTED REGIONS

### Somali region

As at June 2022, the drought had affected all 11 zones in Somali region, with about 3.5 million people in need of assistance, the majority being pastoralists and agropastoralists (OCHA 03/06/2022, 08/09/2022, and 07/02/2022; iMMAP et al. 16/08/2022). The most affected areas include Afder, Daawa, Liban, and Shabelle zones, where Emergency (IPC Phase 4) food security outcomes have been reported (FEWS NET 27/10/2022; OCHA 10/03/2023). In 2022, more than 500,000 cases of malnutrition were recorded (ENCU accessed 14/04/2023; OCHA 08/09/2022; WFP 23/01/2023). Infectious disease outbreaks have also increased. A cholera outbreak that started in Oromia region was reported in late 2022 in Liban zone. By late March 2023, it had spread to Daawa zone (OCHA 28/03/2023, 03/06/2022, 02/02/2023, 30/01/2023, and 18/01/2023). The outbreak has affected four woredas, with the risk of spreading further as a result of current flooding (OCHA 28/03/2023).

As at September 2022, more than 340,000 people were displaced by the drought in the region. The number is likely higher, as around 62 collective sites where drought-related displacements were recorded between June–July could not be accessed between August–September because of insecurity (IOM 27/12/2022). The current rainy season in some drought-affected areas has led to flooding, displacing about 200,000 people in Afder, Fafan, Liban, and Shabelle zones in March 2023 (OCHA 03/04/2023).

### Southern and eastern Oromia

In southern and eastern Oromia, the drought had affected about 3.4 million people as at June 2022, particularly in Bale, Borena, East Bale, East Hararge, Guji, West Guji, and West Hararge zones (OCHA 03/06/2022, 08/09/2022, and 12/04/2022; FEWS NET 27/10/2022). The failure of the Belg rains has resulted in below-average harvests and a lack of pasture for livestock, leading to Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse food insecurity outcomes in drought-affected areas, with Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes being recorded particularly in Borena zone (FEWS NET 27/10/2022). In 2022, more than 1.4 million cases of malnutrition were recorded in Oromia (ENCU accessed 14/02/2023; OCHA 08/09/2022; WFP 23/01/2023). The lack of WASH services has aggravated infectious disease outbreaks, most notably cholera. As at March 2023, cholera had affected 18 woredas in East Bale, West Arsi, and West Guji zones, with more than 2,200 cases and about 50 related deaths reported across the affected zones in Somali and Oromia regions (OCHA 28/03/2023, 30/01/2023, 10/10/2022, and 08/09/2022; WHO 20/09/2022). The rains that started in March 2023 in some drought-affected areas also contributed to a rapid spread of cholera, especially in IDP sites lacking WASH services (OCHA 03/04/2023).

Violence in southern Oromia led to new displacements in 2022, particularly in Borena, East Bale, Guji, and West Guji zones, which were also suffering from the drought (OCHA 08/09/2022). As at September 2022, the drought had displaced more than 160,000 people in Oromia. Since some collective sites in Guji and West Guji could not be accessed because of insecurity and the presence of armed groups, drought-induced displacements are expected to be higher than reported (IOM 27/12/2022). In East Bale, there was a reported increase in displacements as a result of worsening drought conditions, from about 7,000 between June–July 2022 to more than 84,000 from August–September (IOM 27/12/2022 and 20/10/2022). It is unclear how these figures had changed as at 2023, since no recent assessments could be conducted in the areas to determine drought-related displacements. Current rains in parts of the region have caused flooding, leading to the secondary displacement of people initially displaced by the drought. The floods have affected about 27,000 drought-displaced people in Dire and Dubluk woredas in Borena zone (OCHA 03/04/2023).

### Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region

In SNNP, the drought had affected about one million people as at June 2022, affecting the lowland woredas of Gamo, Gofa, Konso, and South Omo the most (OCHA 03/06/2022, 08/09/2022, 09/03/2022, and 07/02/2022). Since most of SNNP relies on the Belg rains for crop production, the consecutive failure of rains led to a poor harvest in 2022, in approximately 224,000 hectares out of a total of over 992,000 hectares of farmland in the region (FEWS NET 27/10/2022; OCHA 08/09/2022; FSNWG 29/07/2022). Crop production during the 2022 *Meher* season was reduced by 31% as a result (OCHA 10/03/2023). The lack of water and pasture for livestock following the failed rains affected the lowland areas of Gamo, Gofa, Konso, and South Omo zones, as well as Alle, Amaro, Burji, and Derashe Special woredas (OCHA 10/03/2023, 08/09/2022, and 07/03/2022). Currently, Crisis (IPC Phase 4) food insecurity outcomes exist in drought-affected areas of the region (FEWS NET 27/10/2022). Over 290,000 cases of malnutrition were recorded in 2022 (ENCU accessed 14/02/2023).

Conflict-induced displacements have been recorded in the region, including in the drought-affected areas of Konso and South Omo zones and Alle and Derashe Special woredas. More than 118,000 conflict-displaced individuals were recorded in the region between August–September 2022 (FEWS NET 27/10/2022; IOM 27/12/2022 and 20/10/2022).

### Afar region

In Afar, there has been little information on the impact of the drought, which is compounded by the northern Ethiopia and Afar-Issa conflicts (OCHA 03/06/2022 and 08/09/2022). Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity outcomes have been reported in the drought-affected areas, and Emergency (IPC Phase 4) food insecurity outcomes are likely

in areas without humanitarian assistance (FEWS NET 27/10/2022). The combined impact of conflict and drought resulted in a high rate of malnutrition in 2022, with 360,000 cases recorded throughout the year (ENCU accessed 14/02/2023). As at November 2022, 30 woredas were recording global acute malnutrition rates of over 15%, which is considered 'critical' and indicates an emergency situation often associated with increased mortality, infectious disease outbreaks, and delayed development among children under five (OCHA 05/01/2023; Tufts Univ. 02/01/2018). The rains that started in March 2023 in parts of the region caused flooding, leading to the loss of crops and livestock death, which is expected to affect food availability for drought-affected populations (OCHA 03/04/2023).

As at September 2022, drought had displaced more than 4,400 people, the majority of whom were in in Awsi (Zone 1). Flooding resulting from the heavy rains in March 2023 displaced more than 12,000 people in Awash, Bori Modayto, Dubti, Gerani, and Mille woredas. Floods also likely occurred in other parts of the region (OCHA 03/04/2023). Five displacement sites hosting drought-displaced people, including those in Awsi (Zone 1), Kilbati (Zone 2), and Fanti (Zone 4), have become inaccessible because of flooding and insecurity, meaning the number of people affected by drought and flooding is expected to be higher (IOM 27/12/2022).

### OUTLOOK

**A sixth below-average rainy season is projected**, with below-average precipitation expected for different parts of the country, including the *Belg* rainy season (February–May) in central and southern Ethiopia, the *Gu/Genna* rainy season (March–May) in southern and southeastern Ethiopia, and the *Diraac/Sugum* rainy season (March–May) in northeastern Ethiopia (FEWS NET 27/10/2022; OCHA 28/02/2023 and 20/03/2023). The current March–May rainy season in pastoral areas is anticipated to continue throughout April, particularly in areas that already started receiving rains in March. That said, below-average rains are expected in southern Ethiopia for the remainder of the season (WFP 04/2023). This will affect cropping areas with short growing seasons.

The anticipated return of El Niño conditions in the second half of 2023 is projected to bring above-average temperatures, worsen the current drought, and trigger more extreme weather events. El Niño could result in reduced rains in Ethiopia's highlands towards the end of the June–September season and abundant rainfall between October–December over currently drought-affected areas. Given low soil absorption capacity in drought-affected areas, extreme precipitation is anticipated to trigger flooding. Forecasted **above-average temperatures** are also expected to wilt crops and pasture for livestock (WMO 22/02/2023; Climate Centre 01/03/2023). Flooding from heavy rains in Daawa zone in Somali region and Borena zone in Oromia region has already displaced people living in collective sites. Flooding also leads to a further depletion of fertile land (Addis Standard 27/03/2023; DW 16/08/2022; FAO 24/03/2023; Hiiran Online 28/03/2023; FAO 04/2023). At the same time, the current rains are creating a favourable

breeding ground for desert locusts, particularly in desert lowland areas such as Somali region, which may lead to losses in agricultural production, pasture for livestock, and forest cover, as a result compromising livelihoods and food security. The sighting of desert locusts in Tigray in March indicates the risk of their reoccurrence and reproduction, particularly if they are not dealt with (Addis Standard 24/03/2023 and 20/01/2020).

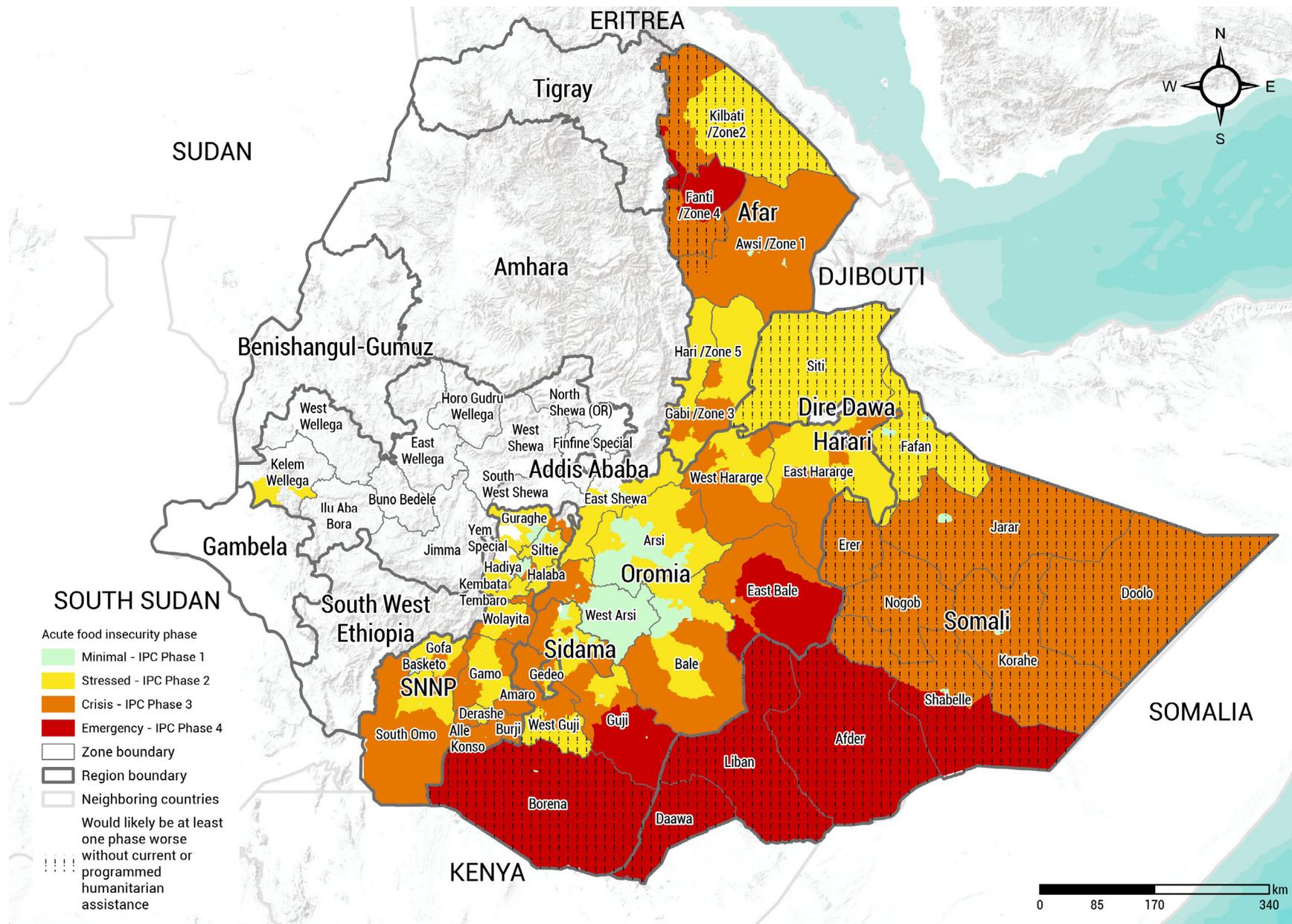
Poor or failed crops are expected because of below-average rains and the erosion of fertile lands from flooding, particularly in southern and southeastern pastoral areas. This has the effect of increasing households' dependence on market-purchased foods and humanitarian assistance (FAO 04/2023; FEWS NET 27/10/2022; CHC 14/01/2023; Addis Standard 27/03/2023; DW 16/08/2022). A late onset of the 2023 Belg rains in cropping areas in South Omo, SNNP, risks leading to a failed cultivation season and compromise livestock recovery, particularly if the rains stop early. A reported lack of seeds and fertiliser in South Omo and parts of Somali region in Afder and Liban zones means less resources for planting, which will affect the 2023 harvest, especially if agricultural inputs are not provided in time for the Meher rains (OCHA 03/04/2023). Given the poor 2022 Belg harvest in Belg-receiving areas, including most of central and eastern Oromia, eastern Amhara, SNNP, and southern Tigray, most drought-affected households are expected to deplete their food reserves early and rely on increasingly expensive food markets, particularly in SNNP and Oromia regions. Widespread Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food security outcomes are expected in Oromia and SNNP. In the worst drought-affected areas of Oromia region, including Afder, Borena, Daawa, and Liban in Somali region and parts of Shabelle River Basin zones, Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes are expected. These outcomes could worsen if humanitarian aid falls below current and planned levels (FEWS NET 27/10/2022).

Food prices are expected to continue rising, with increases in transportation costs resulting from a reduction in government fuel subsidies in 2022. Increases in food prices are expected, particularly in remote areas where goods have to be transported over long distances (FEWS NET 01/2023). Facing diminished incomes and increased food prices, many poor households will not be able to afford food in the market, resulting in the adoption of negative coping mechanisms, including eating smaller quantities of food and reducing the number of meals per day (FEWS NET 27/10/2022; PIN 16/01/2023; STC 13/01/2023).

A continued lack of pasture means that livestock body conditions will remain poor in pastoral areas, which has an impact on new livestock births and milk production and leads to fewer sales (FEWS NET 27/10/2022). Livestock deaths are also expected to continue, leading to reduced herd sizes. Income for livestock-dependent households is expected to significantly decrease, also reducing their purchasing power and constraining their access to markets (FEWS NET 27/10/2022; PIN 16/01/2023). Large-scale livestock deaths could lead pastoralists to irreversibly abandon their livelihood activity, even in the event of favourable rains later in 2023 or in early 2024. Migration to urban areas is expected to continue, as drought-affected populations seek other means of income.

Humanitarian assistance is unlikely to meet all food needs given their magnitude, current resource shortfalls, poor road conditions, access constraints resulting from conflict, and food distribution delays. In many areas across the country, such distributions are being done after every eight weeks or longer when rations are planned to occur every six weeks (FEWS NET 27/10/2022 and 01/2023; STC 13/01/2023; Reuters 14/12/2022). PSNP cash transfers in most of the country are anticipated to continue through mid-2023, although with below-average distributions. It is unclear how many people are expected to benefit from PSNP transfers in 2023. Significant challenges in targeting households and restarting the programme, particularly in Afar region, are expected following the end of the northern Ethiopia conflict. PSNP transfers and humanitarian aid are expected to provide some relief to severe consumption deficits between February–May 2023, but a high level of needs is still anticipated amid delays in distribution and limited PSNP transfers (FEWS NET 01/2023). New displacements are likely as people move in search of food, water, and pasture for their livestock or as a result of flooding. Return prospects for drought-displaced people remain limited because of the erosion of their livelihoods, limited assistance, and the transition of pastoral communities, particularly younger community members, to alternative sources of income.

# FOOD INSECURITY IN AFAR, SNNP, SOMALI, AND SOUTHERN AND EASTERN OROMIA REGIONS



Source: ACAPS using data from FEWS NET accessed 14/04/2023 and OCHA accessed 14/04/2023.

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