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[Somalia faces worsening hunger as drought, conflict and high food prices risk pushing 1 million more people into food insecurity - Somalia | ReliefWeb](#)

Somalia(/country/som)

Somalia faces worsening hunger as drought, conflict and high food prices risk pushing 1 million more people into food insecurity

News and Press Release

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This a summary of what was said by WFP's Director of Food Security and Nutrition Analysis, Jean-Martin Bauer at the Geneva Palais Briefing.

Alarming new data from Somalia shows that one million more people could be pushed into crisis levels of food insecurity in the coming months as drought conditions, conflict and high food prices threaten to disrupt farming, restrict market access and increase humanitarian needs.

The latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis shows that 3.4 million people are already experiencing crisis-levels of hunger or worse (IPC3+). This number is projected to rise to 4.4 million (almost one in every four people in Somalia) between April and June 2025, when below-average rains are forecast, potentially creating drought conditions.

Just three years ago – in late 2022 – Somalia was brought to the brink of famine by the longest drought in recorded history as back-to-back failed rainy seasons devastated the country. A massive scale up of humanitarian assistance from WFP and partners averted famine in late 2022. Now hunger is rising again as another drought looms.

The IPC findings confirm that the erratic rainy season from October to December 2024 led to low crop yields, rapid depletion of pasture and water sources. Meanwhile, earlier in the year, flooding damaged crops and displaced hundreds of thousands of people. Food production in 2024 was 45 per cent below the long-term average. These are all factors that have contributed towards families' rising vulnerability and add to WFP's concern about what the coming months will bring for Somalia.

Around 1.7 million children under the age of five are expected to face acute malnutrition through December 2025. Of those, 466,000 face severe acute malnutrition. Nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) of the total malnutrition burden is concentrated in southern Somalia, where drought conditions and insecurity are the worst.

The hardest-hit households include those with low agricultural yields who have depleted their food stocks, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and pastoralists with limited livestock and below-average earnings from livestock sales.

As humanitarian needs grow, limited funding is resulting in life-saving programmes being reduced or cut altogether. From April, WFP will support 820,000 vulnerable people per month with food and cash assistance – down from a peak of 2.2 million reached monthly in 2024.

Funding shortfalls have also forced WFP to halve the number of students it supports with school meals. In Southwest State, Banadir and Somaliland, school meals have been entirely suspended.

Today, the 2025 Somalia Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan calling for \$1.42 billion is only 12.4 per cent funded. WFP alone has a funding gap of \$297 million for the next six months and without additional funding, critical WFP operations in Somalia will face pipeline breaks by mid-year.

Early action is critical to avert a crisis in Somalia. Funding is urgently required to scale up food assistance, nutrition support, water and sanitation services, as well as livelihood initiatives to mitigate the impacts of the expected drought in Somalia.

Without this, Somalia could once again face deepening hunger.

ENDS

Contact

wfp.media@wfp.org

Primary country:

[Somalia\(/country/som\)](#)

Source:

[World Food Programme\(/organization/wfp\)](#)



9.2M

Overall people affected



5.2M

Overall people in need



3.8M

Overall people targeted



554K

Drought affected HHs



SITUATION UPDATE

In the first quarter of 2025, Somalia is experiencing severe drought conditions due to the poor performance of the 2024 Deyr rains and the ongoing hot and dry Jilal season. These conditions have led to critical water shortages and escalating humanitarian needs. The drought is anticipated to intensify in the coming months, as no significant rainfall is expected until the second quarter of 2025. Projections indicate that over 4M people could face crisis-level hunger by April 2025, exacerbated by conflict and high food prices. The most affected populations include households with limited water access, IDPs, and pastoralists with dwindling livestock. In 2025, over 3M people in Somalia are expected to be affected by the lingering drought that began in 2024 and will require urgent WASH assistance. The people in need have been identified based on their levels of access to water and sanitation facilities, as well as poor hygiene compliance, particularly in IDP camps and rural settlements.

In response, the Somalia WASH Cluster, in collaboration with local authorities, stresses the urgent need for preparedness measures. Priority will be given to lifesaving WASH interventions for drought-affected communities and internally displaced populations. These efforts will focus on locations with chronic WASH vulnerability and high malnutrition to mitigate risks associated with drought and outbreaks of AWD/cholera, ultimately preventing WASH-related morbidity and mortality. Partners will also continue providing sustainable WASH solutions alongside emergency aid for underserved populations. Increased investment in anticipatory action is needed to mitigate the impact of below-normal Gu rains. Key recommendations include improving water resource management, promoting conservation, and expanding strategic water point monitoring. Despite the crisis, partners are responding, but funding shortages limit their capacity. In 2025, urgent, flexible funding is essential to restore communal water sources and expand networks.

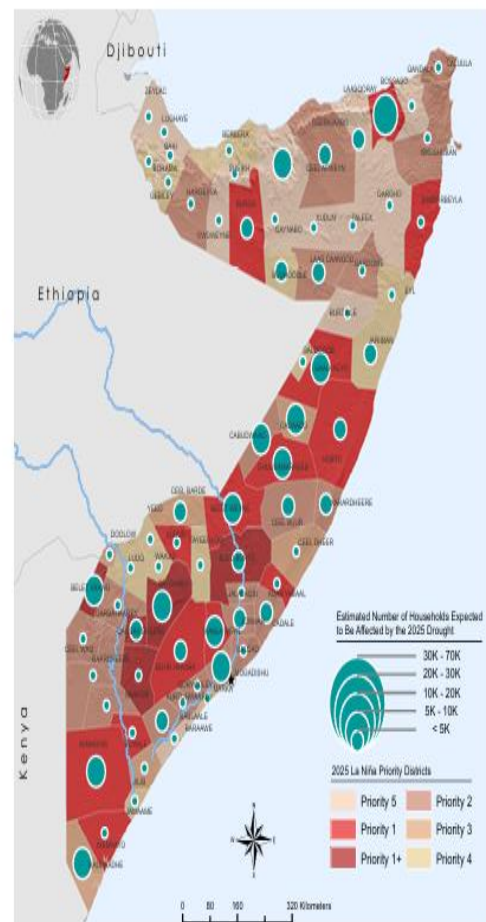


Figure 1: Estimated number of HH expected to be affected by 2025 drought with priority districts

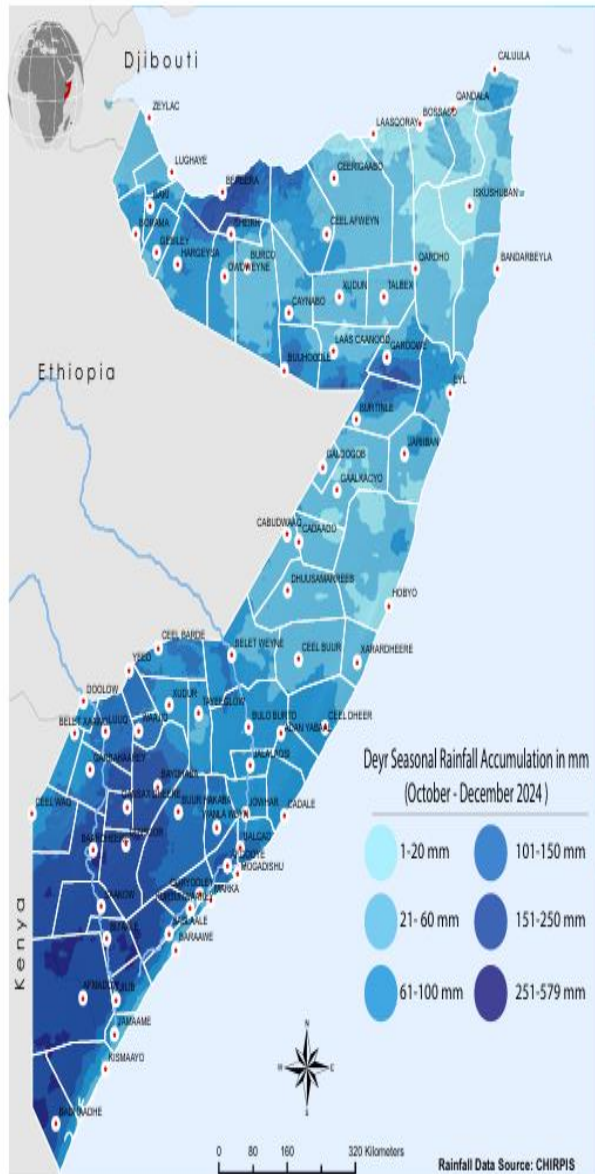


Figure 2: Seasonal (Deyr) Rainfall Accumulation (October- December 2024)

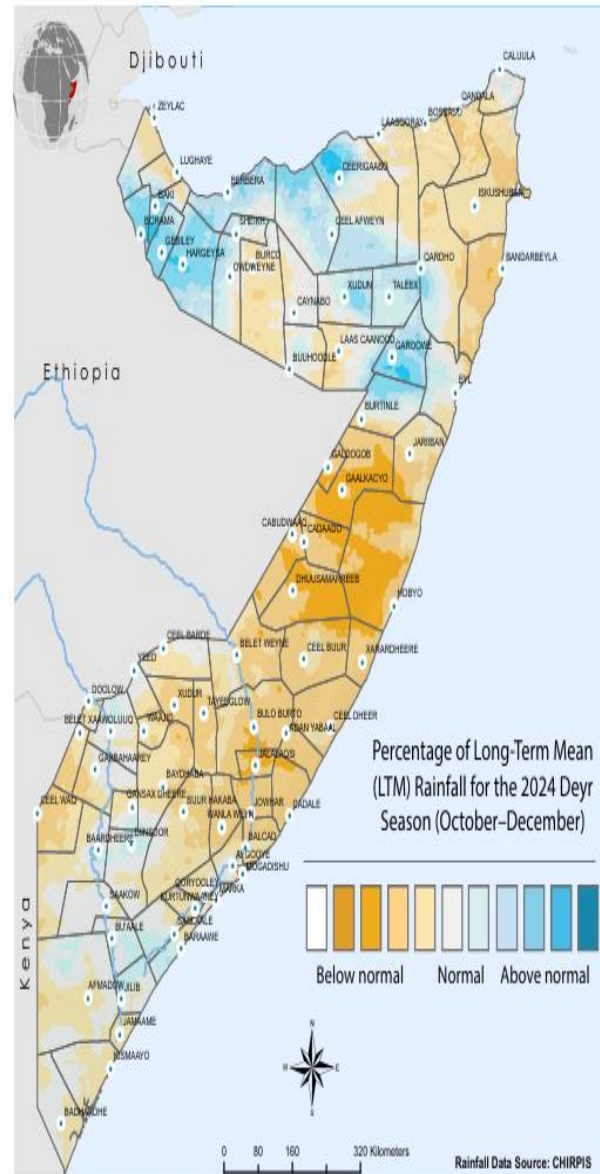


Figure 3: % of Long term mean (LTM) rainfall for the Deyr (October - December 2024) season

The boundaries and names on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by UNICEF or the United Nations.

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<https://response.reliefweb.int/somalia/water-sanitation-hygiene>

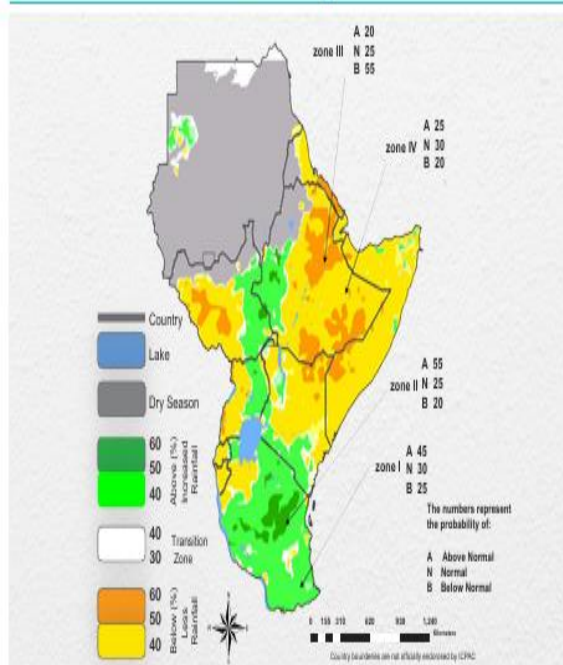


Figure 4: The rainfall outlook for various zones within the GHA region for March to May 2025

The Gu long rains hold significant importance for Somalia, contributing over 70% of the country's annual rainfall. However, the latest seasonal forecasts indicate a high probability of below-normal rainfall, delayed onset, and above-average temperatures. These factors are expected to intensify drought conditions and heighten humanitarian needs, as projected by climate experts at the 69th GHACOF. This outlook, combined with the ongoing hot and dry Jilal season and the poor distribution of the Deyr 2024 rains, signals an increased risk of severe drought, exacerbating the already critical humanitarian situation across the country. The likelihood of drier conditions is particularly high (55%) in regions such as Gedo, parts of Bay, Bakool, Hiraa, and Awdal (Map 4). However, some areas of Puntland may experience isolated above-normal rainfall.

Meanwhile, an analysis of vegetation cover using the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) from February 16 to 25, 2025, reveals widespread negative vegetation conditions and soil moisture deficits across much of Somalia. This decline is especially pronounced in large parts of South-West, Galmudug, Jubaland, and Hirshabelle states, signaling deteriorating pasture and water availability. In contrast, slight improvements in vegetation conditions are observed in the coastal regions of Puntland and Somaliland (Map 5), primarily due to the good Karan rains recorded in December 2024. These rains provided temporary relief for livestock-dependent communities by supporting pasture regeneration. However, the overall vegetation stress across most of the country underscores the prolonged impact of dry conditions and the urgent need for targeted interventions to protect livelihoods and mitigate food insecurity.

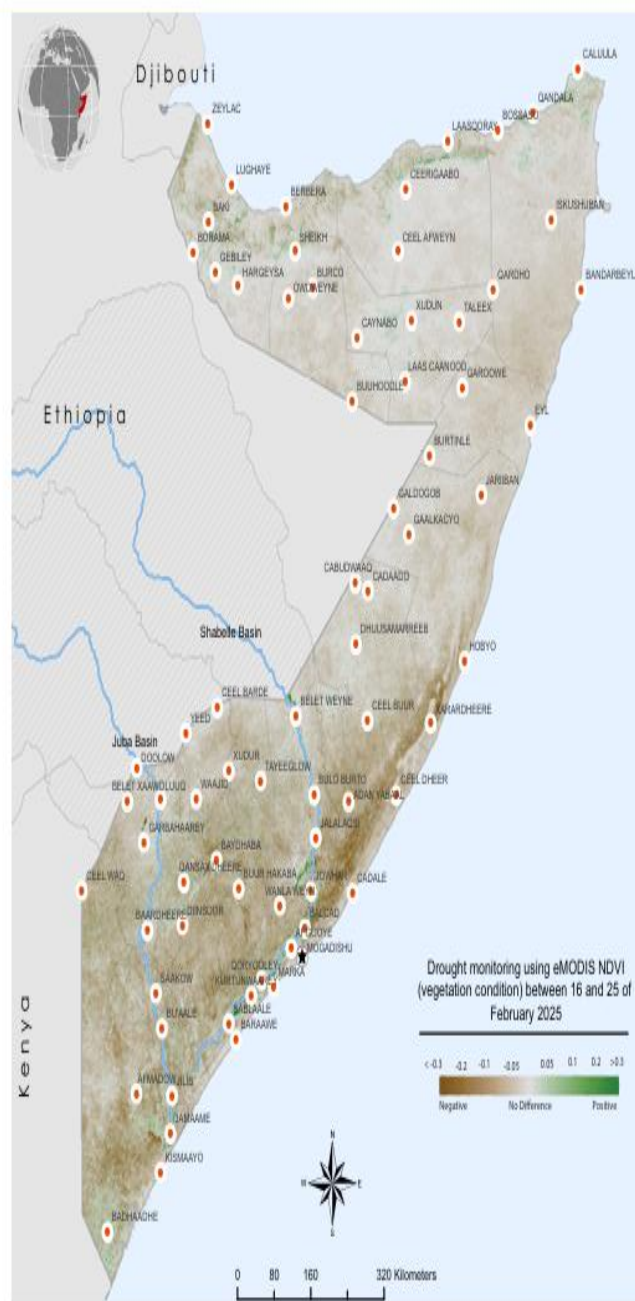


Figure 5: Drought monitoring using eMODIS NDVI vegetation condition (16 - 25 February 2025)

<https://www.unocha.org/>

Drought, conflict and high food prices risk pushing 4.4 million people into hunger, Federal Government of Somalia and UN warn

26 February 2025, Mogadishu - New data from Somalia shows that 4.4 million people could face hunger by April 2025, driven by worsening drought conditions, conflict and high food prices.

The Federal Government of Somalia and the United Nations agencies warn that without funding for humanitarian action, the country – which in 2022 was pushed to the brink of famine by severe drought, resulting in thousands of deaths, with nearly half being children – millions could once again face deepening hunger.

Today's warning from the Somali Disaster Management Agency (SoDMA), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the UN World Food Programme (WFP) comes as [the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification \(IPC\) analysis](#) shows that 3.4 million people are already experiencing crisis-levels, or higher, of hunger in Somalia. This number is projected to rise to 4.4 million (23 per cent of the population) between April and June 2025, when below-average Gu rains are forecast.

"Worsening drought poses a severe threat to communities already grappling with immense hardship and ongoing conflict. Urgent action is required to save lives, protect livelihoods, and prevent further suffering," said His Excellency Mohamuud Moallim, Commissioner of the Somali Disaster Management Agency (SoDMA). "This time, we are not only confronting the devastating impacts of drought but also compounding risks, including conflict and an unprecedented decline in humanitarian funding. These overlapping crises demand immediate, collective and well-coordinated action to strengthen Somalia's resilience and safeguard our most vulnerable communities."

The hardest-hit households include those with low agricultural yields who have depleted their food stocks, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and pastoralists with limited livestock and below-average earnings from livestock sales.

"Worsening drought, erratic rainfall, and ongoing conflict are eroding livelihoods, pushing families deeper into crisis," said FAO Representative in Somalia Etienne Peterschmitt. "FAO is responding by scaling up its support for increased agricultural production, promoting climate-smart solutions, and strengthening resilient agrifood systems. Through early warning systems and anticipatory action, we help communities prepare for shocks before they escalate, mitigating the worst impacts of food crises."

Call for urgent funding

Acute funding shortfalls have resulted in life-saving programmes being reduced or cut altogether. The UN is calling for more urgent funding to scale up food assistance, nutrition support, water and sanitation services, as well as livelihood initiatives to mitigate the impacts of the expected drought in Somalia. Today,

the 2025 Somalia Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan, calling for US\$1.42 billion, is only 12.4 per cent funded.

"Recurrent climate shocks, protracted conflict, disease outbreaks and widespread poverty, among other factors, have aggravated the humanitarian crisis in Somalia. Aid agencies are doing their best to save lives, but they urgently need adequate funding to meet the most critical needs at this juncture in Somalia," said Crispin Rukasha, Head of Office, OCHA Somalia.

Children facing severe acute malnutrition

An estimated 1.7 million children under the age of five face acute malnutrition through December 2025. Of those, 466,000 face severe acute malnutrition – an increase of nine per cent compared to the same period last year. Nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) of the total malnutrition burden is concentrated in southern Somalia, where drought conditions and insecurity are the worst.

"Past climate events demonstrate that children are the most affected, facing severe malnourishment and diseases that increase their risk of death and long-term developmental issues," said Nisar Syed, UNICEF Somalia Representative Officer in Charge. "As prevention is key, UNICEF provides access to clean water and sanitation, provides micronutrients, trains caregivers to identify early signs of malnutrition and operates in remote areas. Given the recurring nature of these crises, we must emphasize a multi-sector approach while working with all stakeholders and the Government to invest in resilience, anticipatory action and a robust health system."

The IPC findings also confirm that erratic rainfall in 2024 led to low crop yields, rapid depletion of pasture and water sources, flooding of food crops, and displacement of hundreds of thousands of people.

"Recurrent shocks such as droughts are leaving millions of Somalis at risk of hunger as food prices increase and harvests dwindle. Famine was narrowly avoided in 2022 due to large-scale humanitarian support, which is needed again to provide immediate assistance while implementing longer-term solutions. However, funding shortfalls are forcing us to prioritize and reduce assistance at the worst possible time," said El-Khidir Daloum, WFP's Country Director in Somalia.

Ends.

Resources

Download the latest IPC food security analysis [here](#) .

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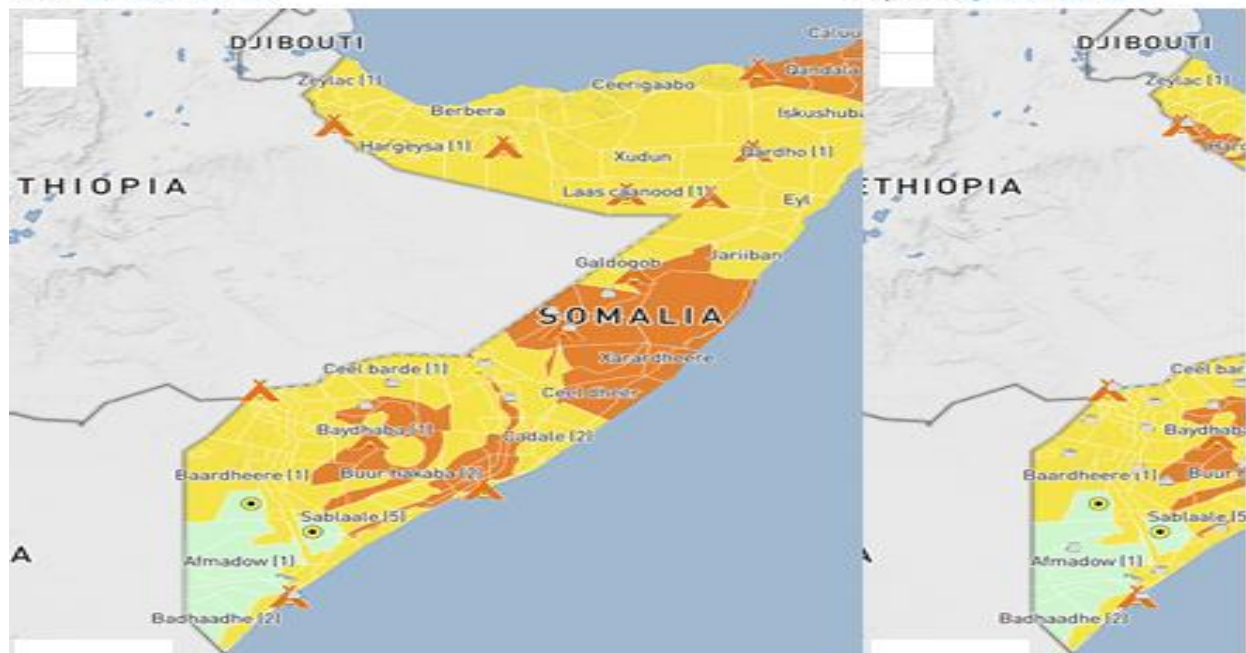
OCHA Somalia

Somalia: Acute Food Insecurity Situation for January – March 2025 and Projection for April – June 2025

SOMALIA: About 3.4 million experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity; 1.7 million children likely to suffer acute malnutrition

Current: Jan 2025 - Mar 2025

Projected: Apr 2025 - Jun 2025



Disclaimer: The information shown on this map does not imply that the IPC officially recognizes or endorses physical and political boundaries.

Disclaimer: The information shown on this map does not imply that the IPC officially recognizes or endorses physical and political boundaries.

Current: Jan 2025 - Mar 2025



Key results

Nearly 3.4 million people (17 percent of the analysed population) are facing high levels of acute food insecurity between January to March 2025. Of that total, 442,000 people are in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) and 2.9 million people are in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis). While localized flooding has damaged crops and displaced livestock communities, conflict and insecurity continue to disrupt livelihoods and restrict market access.

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Although the current food insecurity levels have improved by 15 percent compared to last year—mainly due to better rainfall and humanitarian aid—conditions are expected to worsen. Between April and June 2025, below-average rainfall, high food prices, conflict, and further flooding could push 4.4 million people (23 percent of the population) into IPC Phase 3 or above.

Somali Red Crescent activates early action protocol for ‘spreading drought’

[« Go to news archive](#)



11 February 2025

By the Climate Centre

The Somali Red Crescent has now activated the **early action protocol for drought** that was published by the IFRC last August.

After an analysis of the latest data from specialists of the **ICPAC** and **IPC** agencies, the Red Crescent has begun implementing early actions for some 30,000 people at risk in the Togdheer, Sool, Bari and Mudug regions.

These will include cash transfer

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The Somali Red Crescent consulted widely in the development process leading up to the finalization of the drought EAP, activated on 31 January, including both external stakeholders and internal workshops with its branches and senior management.

Technical support centred on assessment, triggers, forecasting and information management was provided by the Heidelberg Institute for Geoinformation Technology, the German Red Cross, and the Climate Centre.

'Dire conditions'

This EAP's overall purpose is to mitigate the cascading impacts of drought such as water scarcity and food insecurity by providing vulnerable people with early warning information (*photo*), multi-purpose cash, and rehabilitation of water infrastructure; its target population groups are pastoral farmers and IDPs.

During the last 20 years, in addition to drought Somalia has experienced the full range of serious shocks: floods, cyclones, locust invasions, the 2004 tsunami, and conflict.

"Among these shocks, drought is the most high-impact natural hazard in terms of the number of people affected. Recurrent droughts have become the new norm, occurring consecutively with devastating results on human life," the IFRC says in the protocol text.

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The government and its humanitarian partners have launched a US\$ 1.42 billion humanitarian response plan to assist 4.6 million people out of just under 6 million who have been assessed as in need of assistance this year.

Somali Red Crescent early actions in Somalia over the next few weeks will include early warning and cash grants for communities facing the latest chapter in the country's long history of drought emergencies. (Photo: SRC)

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[Somalia\(/country/som\)](#)

Somalia - Food insecurity and malnutrition (DG ECHO, IPC, UN, INGOs) (ECHO Daily Flash of 25 February 2025)

News and Press Release

Source: [ECHO\(/organization/echo\)](#)

Posted: 25 Feb 2025

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- From April to June 2025, Somalia's already dire food security and malnutrition situation will worsen. Around 4.4 million people are projected to face high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC 3 or above) - a 22% increase compared to the same period in the previous year.
- The main drivers behind this deterioration are La Niña-induced drought conditions, above five-year average food prices, limited carryover stocks, high shipping costs and ongoing conflict and insecurity in central, parts of northwest and southern Somalia.
- Due to a characteristic spike in disease outbreaks and reduced food access over the April to June period, acute malnutrition will worsen with at least 1.7 million children below five expected to be acutely malnourished. Compromised access to safe drinking water, inadequate sanitation facilities and limited routine vaccination will further increase the risk of diseases.
- In addition, for the past three years, US funding provided 67% of the food security partners' resources and 76% of the nutrition partners' ones in Somalia. Following the US freeze, no humanitarian partner reported receiving US funding in 2025.



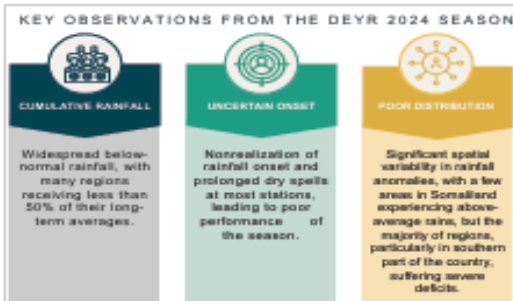
Key Highlights

The Deyr 2024 season in Somalia was marked by significant rainfall deficits, poor temporal and spatial distribution, and prolonged dry spells leading to moderate - severe drought conditions in southern and central regions. The ongoing JilaaI season, characterized by intense heat and aridity, is likely to have further exacerbated water and pasture stress, intensifying livelihood challenges. Looking ahead, the Gu 2025 season is forecasted to bring below-normal rainfall, delayed onset, and above-average temperatures, amplifying drought conditions and increasing humanitarian needs.

The ongoing JilaaI season has intensified water and pasture scarcity, especially in Bay, Gedo, and Lower Shabelle regions, leading to heightened drought severity. These conditions are compounded by persistent La Niña influences, with reports of increased food insecurity, malnutrition, and displacement.

The outlook for Gu 2025 presents additional challenges:

- Below-normal rainfall is expected across most of Somalia, with a delayed onset predicted in key agricultural areas.
- Above-average temperatures will increase evapotranspiration, exacerbating water stress and reducing agricultural productivity.



- Humanitarian needs, including food security, malnutrition, and displacement, are expected to worsen, with women, children, and marginalized groups likely to be disproportionately affected.

This report presents a review of the Deyr 2024 performance, the current status of JilaaI, and the Gu 2025 outlook, along with actionable advisories to mitigate negative impacts.

Review of the Observed Deyr 2024 Rainfall

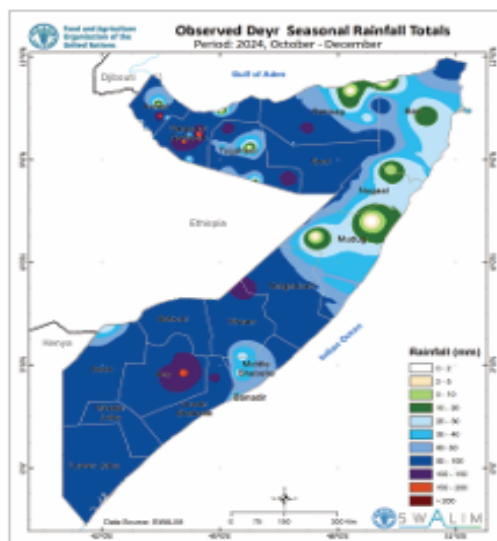
Spatial Distribution of Cumulative Rainfall

The observed Deyr 2024 rainfall (Map 1) was marked by significant spatial variability across Somalia with as much as 150 mm in some parts of Somaliland and very isolated area in Bay region, and less than 10 mm in some areas in Puntland, Sanaag and even Somaliland.

The spatial variation of the cumulative Deyr 2024 rainfall based on the individual stations is as follows (Map 1):

Cumulative rainfall amounts above 100 mm were observed in the following stations: Gumburaha (101 mm), Malawle (106.5 mm), Xasbahale (109 mm), Amoud (110 mm), Wanle-Wayne (110 mm), Burtinle (112 mm), Elafweyn (114 mm), Mataban (115 mm), Mahas (116.4 mm), Kismaayo (116.4 mm), Las'Anod (119 mm), Widi (119.6 mm), Aburin (121.5 mm), Murcaayo (136.9 mm), Sheikh (147.5 mm), Qansax dheere (153.5 mm), Bur Hakaba (158 mm), Xudun (158.2 mm), Baki (176.5 mm), Gacan-libah (187.5 mm), Dhubato (191 mm) and Hargeisa (203 mm).

Cumulative rainfall amounts between 50 mm and 100 mm were recorded over the following stations: Buhoodle (51.2 mm), Luuq (53 mm), Harirad (55 mm), Danusalam (55.5 mm), Allaybaday (55.5 mm), Awdheegle (56.5 mm), Taysa (57 mm), Taleeh (57.8 mm), Cada (58 mm), Afgoi (59.3 mm), Boon (62 mm), Qardho (69 mm), Cadaadley (70 mm), Dilla (70 mm), Beled-Hawa (70.9 mm), Dhalhar (71 mm), Las Dacawo (71 mm),



Map 1: Observed cumulative Deyr 2024 rainfall over Somalia

Somalia faces escalating crisis amid drought, conflict and price hikes



© UNICEF Somalia | A woman with her one-year-old child who is being treated for malnutrition in Dollow, Somalia. An additional 4.4 million people across the country are at risk of falling into hunger and malnutrition.

By Vibhu Mishra

26 February 2025 | [Humanitarian Aid](#)

The humanitarian situation in Somalia is worsening as drought, conflict and soaring food prices push millions toward extreme hunger, UN agencies warned on Wednesday.

"Worsening drought, erratic rainfall and ongoing conflict are eroding livelihoods, pushing families deeper into crisis," [said](#) Etienne Peterschmitt, head of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization ([FAO](#)) in Somalia.

The hunger crisis is expected to be most severe among internally displaced persons (IDPs), pastoralists with limited livestock and farming households that have exhausted their food supplies.

Consecutive climate shocks

Somalia has suffered consecutive climate shocks, with below-average rainfall in late 2024 **severely reducing crop yields, depleting water sources and leading to livestock losses**. The effects of erratic rainfall and riverine flooding in key agricultural areas – such as Hiraan, Middle Shabelle and Middle Juba – further devastated crops.

As a result, food prices remain high, worsening food insecurity for millions of Somalis already struggling with poverty and conflict-driven displacement.

According to the [latest report](#) by the global food security tracker, IPC, 1.7 million children under five are expected to suffer from acute malnutrition in 2025, including 466,000 with severe acute malnutrition – an increase of 9 per cent compared to last year.

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 Drought conditions worsening in [#Somalia](#).

 1M more Somalis to experience acute [#foodinsecurity](#) in April-June; people facing acute food insecurity to rise from 3.4M to 4.4M.

 Without urgent action, [#Somalia](#) could again plunge into large-scale crisis.

shorturl.at/TSrpR

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Nearly two-thirds of these cases are concentrated in southern Somalia, where food insecurity is most extreme.

Children most at risk

"Past climate events demonstrate that **children are the most affected, facing severe malnourishment and diseases that increase their risk of death and long-term developmental issues,**" said Nisar Syed, Officer-in-Charge for the UN Children's Fund ([UNICEF](#)) in Somalia.

He underscored the need to urgently implement better prevention measures, emphasising a multi-sector approach.

This must combine immediate humanitarian response with long-term investments in resilience and health systems, he added.

Multiple pressures

Somalia's food crisis is driven by multiple, overlapping factors: the 2024 Deyr rainy season (October–December) brought below-average rainfall, impacting both agropastoral communities and urban dwellers reliant on local food markets.

The upcoming Gu season (April–June) is also forecast to be drier than normal, raising fears of further crop failures.

At the same time, conflict and insecurity continue to displace families and disrupt livelihoods. Fighting in central and southern Somalia has hindered access to markets and aid, making it harder for affected communities to access food and basic services.

"Recurrent climate shocks, protracted conflict, disease outbreaks and widespread poverty, among other factors, have aggravated the humanitarian crisis in Somalia," said Crispin Rukasha, Head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)) in Somalia.

"Aid agencies are doing their best to save lives, but **they urgently need adequate funding to meet the most critical needs** at this juncture in Somalia," he stressed.



© UNDP Somalia | Droughts are a constant threat in Somalia, in the horn of Africa.

Action stations

The agencies warned that without swift intervention, the situation could deteriorate to catastrophic levels.

Though they are working to scale up food assistance, nutrition and livelihood support, **programmes could be forced to scale down or stop altogether amid "critically low" funding.**

The [2025 Somalia Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan](#), which requires \$1.42 billion, is currently only 12.4 per cent funded.

"Famine was narrowly avoided in 2022 due to large-scale humanitarian support, which is needed again to provide immediate assistance while implementing longer-term solutions," said El-Khidir Daloum, UN World Food Programme ([WFP](#)) Country Director in Somalia.

"However, funding shortfalls are forcing us to prioritize and reduce assistance at the worst possible time," he added, urging greater international support.