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Widespread Humanitarian Crisis Affecting 3.2 Million People or 43% of the Total Population

Results of a country-wide comprehensive assessment, led by the Food Security Analysis Unit for Somalia (FAO/FSAU), with other partners, confirms that there is an **ongoing and sustained Humanitarian Crisis in Somalia, with 43% of the total population of the country or around 3.2 million people are in need of emergency livelihood and life saving assistance.** A failed state since the early 1990s, Somalia has had recurring humanitarian emergencies over the last eighteen years and is a country characterized by chronically high rates of acute malnutrition above emergency levels, and chronic levels of food insecurity among the rural population. The ongoing humanitarian crisis, however, is unique in that the crisis is widespread; not only are 1.2 million rural people in crisis, nearly two thirds of those in crisis, or 2 million people, are urban poor and internally displaced populations (IDPs) (Map 1 and Table 1).

The key driving factor behind the current emergency is a macro-economic crisis, driven by a significantly devalued Somali Shilling and hyperinflation of basic food and non-food items. This macro-economic crisis is exacerbated by months of increased conflict that have internally displaced more than one million people throughout the country. Furthermore, the *Deyr* season rains (Oct. –Dec. '08) were below normal. This not only deepened an already severe ongoing drought and pastoral humanitarian emergency in the Central region, but has resulted in another year of below normal annual cereal production and an overall annual cereal availability deficit of 120,000MT. Nutrition surveys continue to highlight emergency levels of acute malnutrition throughout Somalia, due to a combination of a deteriorating food security situation, continuing displacement caused by insecurity, uncontrolled disease outbreaks and a fundamental lack of basic services. An estimated 200,000 children under 5 years of age in Somalia are acutely malnourished, of which 60,000 are severely malnourished and at an increased risk of death if they do not receive the appropriate specialist care. One in six children are acutely malnourished and one in twenty are severely malnourished. These extreme numbers will have a long term devastating impact on the economic potential of the country.

The growing **urban food crisis** is widespread throughout Somalia, affecting roughly 25% of the total urban population, or **705,000 people**. Of this total, **565,000 are in Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis (AFLC)** requiring emergency livelihood support and **140,000 are in Humanitarian Emergency** requiring both emergency livelihood and life saving assistance. Additionally, there are 1,021,000 new IDPs from the increased conflict over the last two years, plus 275,000 protracted IDPs, who are equally affected by the food price crisis. Urban poor food access is severely constrained as people struggle to meet their basic food and non-food needs in the face of historic record high food prices. Prices of imported rice and local cereals increased between 230% and 350% from early 2008. These price increases are significantly greater than global cereal price increases. Although prices declined slightly from Oct. '08, providing some benefits, they are still 450-780% above normal. The average cost of the urban poor minimum expenditure basket needed for survival has more than doubled in the last year, while the purchasing power of the poor is significantly below normal, because incomes have not kept pace with rising food and non-food prices.

With income unable to match basic food and non-food price increases, the urban poor have had to seek additional financial support, in the form of cash gifts, loans and remittances, to meet their basic food needs. By Dec. '08, financial assistance was covering between 15-35% of the cost of a minimum survival basket of goods. Poor households have switched to cheaper local cereals, skipping whole meals and borrowing food from neighbours. The percentage of urban poor households employing one or more of these distress coping mechanisms increased from 32% in Oct. '07 to 59% in Oct. '08. The increased inability to cope has resulted in reduced levels of dietary diversity, as 20-60% of the poor urban households were reported to have consumed less than four food groups per day in Oct. '08. "If the situation does not improve, urban populations will exhaust many of their coping options", says Cindy Holleman, the Chief Technical Advisor of the FAO/FSAU. "Already urban poor households are deeply indebted and becoming more impoverished, thus increasing their vulnerability to shocks and further crises".

The **rural crisis** is more severe in that more than half or **680,000 people are in Humanitarian Emergency (HE)** requiring emergency livelihood and life saving interventions. Another **535,000 are in Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis (AFLC)** emergency livelihood support. The largest concentrations of rural populations in crisis are in South and Central regions, where the situation has deteriorated in the last six months, most notably in the drought stricken pastoral Central region, and in the pastoral and agro-pastoral areas of Middle Shabelle, Gedo, Hiran and Bakool regions.

For more information see: www.fsasomali.org, or contact FSAU: fsauinfo@fsau.or.ke.

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Map 1: Somalia Food Security Situation Analysis: Post Deyr '08/09 Projection, January - June 2009

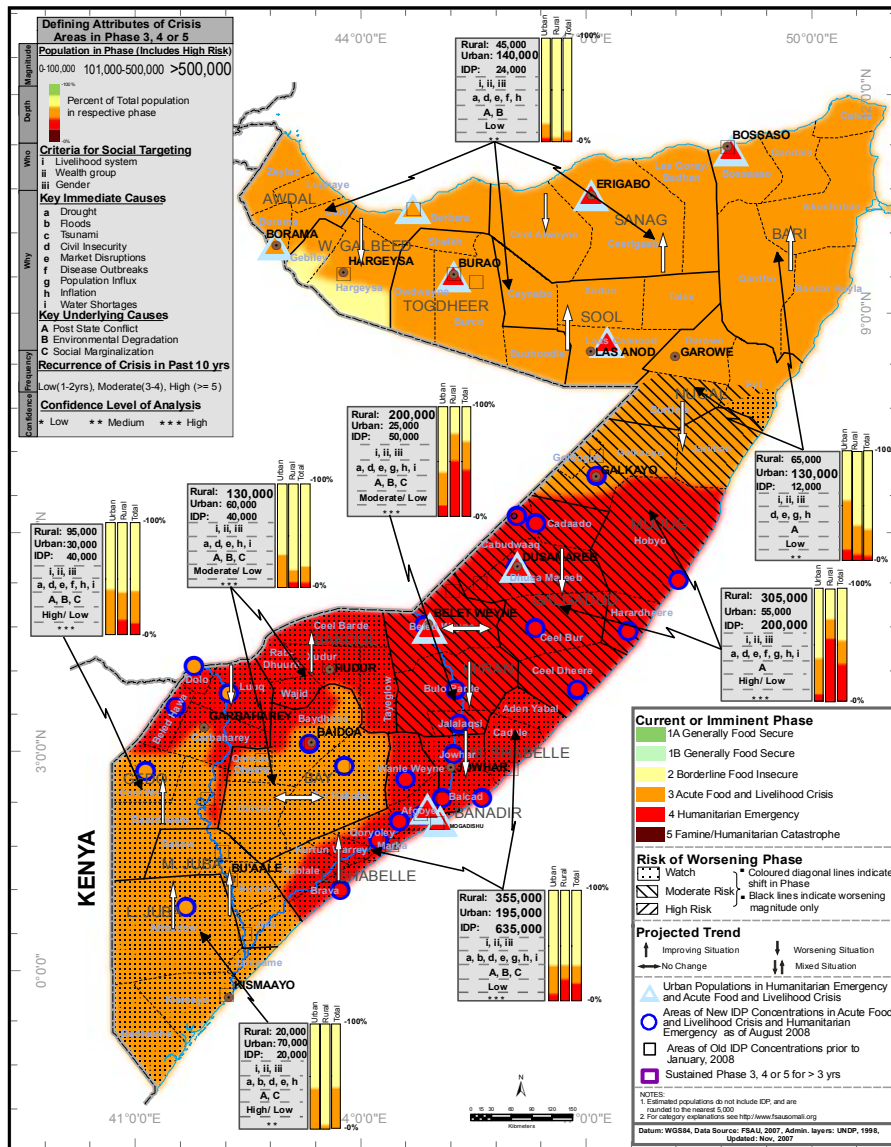


Table 1: Somalia Food Security Situation Analysis: Post Deyr '08/09 Population Numbers, January - June 2009

Region	UNDP 2005 Total Population	UNDP 2005 Urban Population	UNDP 2005 Rural Population	Urban in Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis (AFLC)	Rural in Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis (AFLC)	Urban in Humanitarian Emergency (HE)	Rural Humanitarian Emergency (HE)	Total in AFLC and HE as % of Total population
North								
Awdal	305,455	110,942	194,513	10,000	20,000	0	0	10
Woqooyi Galbeed	700,345	490,432	209,913	10,000	5,000	0	0	2
Togdheer	402,295	123,402	278,893	55,000	10,000	20,000	0	21
Sanaag	270,367	56,079	214,288	20,000	10,000	5,000	0	13
Sool	150,277	39,134	111,143	15,000	0	5,000	0	13
Bari	367,638	179,633	202,737	80,000	0	25,000	0	29
Nugaal	145,341	54,749	75,860	25,000	20,000	0	0	31
Sub-total	2,341,718	1,054,371	1,287,347	215,000	65,000	55,000	0	14
Central								
Mudug	350,099	94,405	255,694	30,000	60,000	0	80,000	49
Galgaduud	330,057	58,977	271,080	15,000	45,000	10,000	165,000	71
Sub-total	680,156	153,382	526,774	45,000	105,000	10,000	245,000	60
South								
Hiraan	329,811	69,113	260,698	20,000	65,000	5,000	135,000	68
Shabelle Dhexe (Middle)	514,901	95,831	419,070	30,000	65,000	0	165,000	50
Shabelle Hoose (Lower)	850,651	172,714	677,937	65,000	70,000	15,000	55,000	24
Bakool	310,627	61,438	249,189	25,000	80,000	0	45,000	48
Bay	620,562	126,813	493,749	35,000	5,000	0	0	6
Gedo	328,378	81,302	247,076	30,000	60,000	0	35,000	38
Juba Dhexe (Middle)	238,877	54,739	184,138	25,000	10,000	0	0	15
Juba Hoose (Lower)	385,790	124,682	261,108	45,000	10,000	0	0	14
Sub-total	3,579,597	786,632	2,792,965	275,000	365,000	20,000	435,000	31
Banadir	901,183	901,183		30,000		55,000		9
Grand Total	7,502,654	2,895,568	4,607,086	565,000	535,000	140,000	680,000	26

Assessed and Contingency Population in AFLC and HE	Number affected	% of Total population	Distribution of populations in crisis
Assessed Urban population in AFLC and HE	705,000	9	22%
Assessed Rural population in AFLC and HE	1,215,000	16	38%
Estimated number of new IDPs (UNHCR, Protection Cluster, Jan. 9, '09)	1,020,000	14	32%
Estimated number of protracted IDPs	275,000	4	9%
Estimated Rural, Urban and IDP population in crisis	3,215,000	43	100.0%