

OVERVIEW

As concern grows about increasing civil and food insecurity in some parts of Southern Somalia, a first round of more intensive nutrition surveillance confirms that malnutrition levels have already increased.

Intensified surveillance in South Galcayo and Galgaduud also shows high levels of malnutrition whereas the situation in South Mudug appears to be stable.

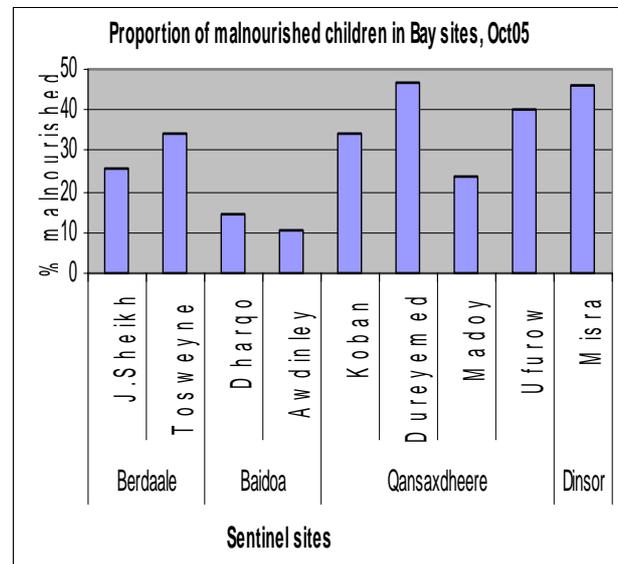
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Bay Region: Extremely worrying malnutrition levels in villages affected by recent civil insecurity

In parts of Bay Region, from late 2004 to Sept 2005, civil insecurity has increased, food security has deteriorated¹ and population displacement and loss of assets has occurred. Civil insecurity has limited humanitarian interventions. In response to these changes, monitoring has been intensified through a number of newly established sentinel sites.

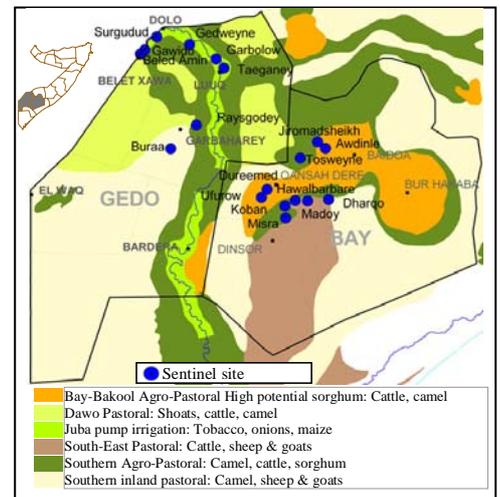
FSAU in partnership with Somali Red Crescent Society conducted the first round of sentinel sites surveillance in nine sites in Berdaale, Baidoa, Qansaxdheere and Dinsor Districts between 8th and 21st October 2005, collecting information and monitoring trends on the population wellbeing and influencing factors.² Insecurity impeded data collection in two out of intended three sites in Dinsor District.³



Levels of malnutrition in the sentinel sites are shown in the graph

and indicate an extremely worrying situation, especially in predominantly agro-pastoral areas previously having high levels of malnutrition that were affected by conflict in Qansaxdheere, the northern part of Dinsor and Berdaale Districts.

Only 5% of the assessed children were from IDP households in Qansaxdheere and Dinsor Districts. About 18% of the pregnant women were either malnourished or at risk of malnutrition (MUAC<23.0cm). Forty one percent of the 378 children assessed in the nine sites had had an illness two weeks prior to the assessment. The common diseases were acute respiratory infection (15%), diarrhoea & vomiting (9% & 4%), fever (6%), intestinal worms (4%), and skin infection (3%). Other illnesses were malaria



¹ FSAU, 2005 Post GU Analysis technical series no. IV, FSAU Nutrition Update, Sept 2005, FSAU FS and Nut. Monthly Brief Oct 2005.

² The sentinel sites are Jromadsheikh and Tosweyne in Berdaale District, Awdinley and Dharqo in Baidoa District, Ufurow, Madoy, Koban and Dureyemed in Qansaxdheere District and Misra in Dinsor District. With the exception of Awdinley, Jromadsheikh and Tosweyne, all the other sites were affected by the recent clan conflict either their residents being displaced or hosting IDP between late 2004 and Sept 2005.

³ Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected from the randomly selected households, focus group discussions and key informant interviews in each site. Nutrition status of a minimum of 35 children, aged 6-59 months, per site was assessed using weight and height measurement while the adult malnutrition among women was assessed using Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC). The children screened in each village ranged between 39 and 47.

The Nutrition Surveillance Project is managed by FAO, funded by USAID/OFDA and receives support from the EC

PARTNERS INCLUDE MOHL SOMALILAND, MOSA PUNTLAND, FAO, UNICEF, WHO, SRC/ICRC, SCRS/IFRC, WVI, GHC, IMC, MSF-S, COSV, AAH, MUSLIM AID-UK, INTERSOS, CISP, ZAMZAM FOUNDATION, COMMUNITIES OF WABERI, HAMARWEIN AND HAMAR JABJAB, ACF, COOPI, MSF-H, MSF-B, Save the Children, CARE, UNOCHA, ADRA

and anaemia.

Qansaxdheere District and the immediate border areas in other districts experienced total crop failure in Gu 2005. In addition, significant number of villages were either burnt or had their deyr 2004/5 food stock burnt in the past 12 months' conflict. Bay Region's livestock have moved towards Southern and South East Baidoa in search of pastures, hence the scarcity of milk and other livestock products in most parts. There is severe water scarcity, e.g. Qansaxdheere and Berdaale. About 37% of the households consumed one or two food groups (mainly sorghum and oil) in a day.

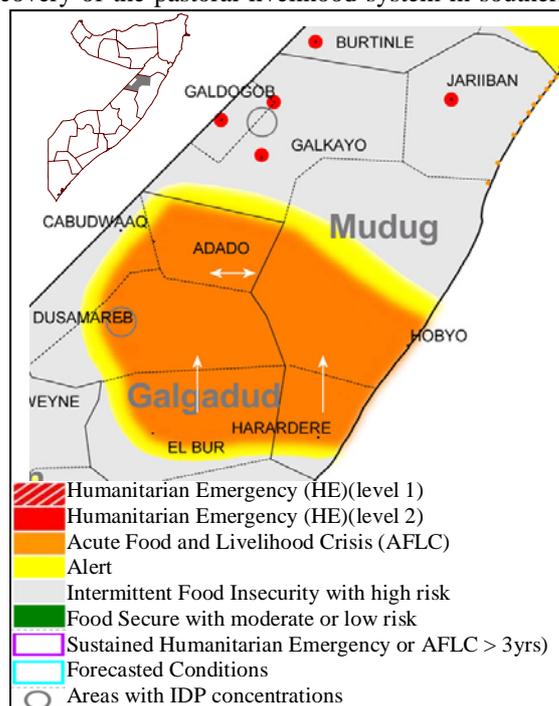
In anticipation of the Deyr rains, in early October, the related need for farm preparation and improvement of the security situation, IDPs began to return to their residential areas within the region (with exception of Idaale population). FSAU will continue to closely monitor these highly vulnerable populations.

South Galcayo: Critical nutrition situation as insecurity persists

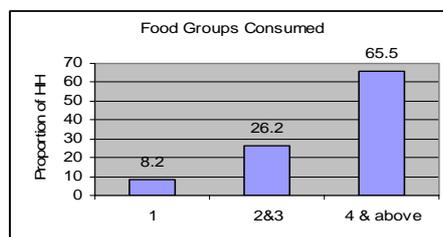
Following above usual Gu (April –June 2005) rains, a slow but steady recovery of the pastoral livelihood system in southern Galcayo district has been observed. (The livelihood system had collapsed due to progressive drought of over three years that led to massive deaths of livestock). Currently, the population groups bordering Galgaduud face an 'alert' and the rest, 'an intermittent food security situation with high risk' (FSAU 2005 Post Gu Analysis – refer to the attached map). Southern Galcayo district also faces continued insecurity resulting from inter clan fighting, which hinders humanitarian interventions including nutrition surveys.

On September 19th–22nd, FSAU, in collaboration with partners led a rapid nutrition assessment in South Galcayo aimed at determining the nutrition situation of the population groups in the area and analysing the contributory factors. A total of 221 children from 123 households (from four randomly selected villages of Qadajir, Saddexhiglo, Ducal, Galberwego) were assessed and their nutrition status analysed using the weight for height (WFH) z score index.

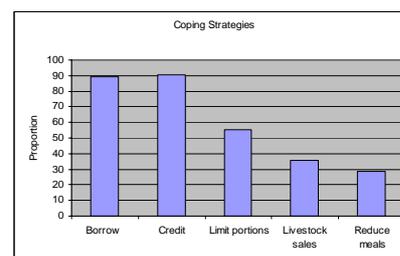
Analysis of the results indicates the total acute malnutrition (WFH < -2 z scores and/or oedema) of 19.0% and severe acute malnutrition (WFH < -3 z scores and/or oedema) of 2.9% including two cases of bilateral oedema (about 1%). The crude mortality rate is less than 1/10,000/day and therefore in the acceptable range (WHO classification). Further findings indicate that 21% of the children had suffered from an illness in the two weeks preceding the assessment. ARI (8%) and suspected malaria (6%) were the illnesses commonly encountered. Access to health services offered by the MSF Holland managed hospital in North Galcayo was also limited due to insecurity. Mortality rates have been mitigated through the therapeutic feeding program and hospital services offered by MSF Holland, in North Galcayo.



In the 24 hours preceding the assessment, the majority (66%) of the assessed households consumed a diverse diet comprising four or more food groups (FAO classification – refer to the chart). Most common foods were cereal, vegetable oil and sugar. Milk was consumed by 72% of the households, and legumes by 68%. Households' consumption of meat (6%), fruit (14%) and vegetables (20%) was limited. Egg and fish were not consumed. Low diversity as seen in 34% of the households (refer to chart) may have contributed to the critical level of acute malnutrition.



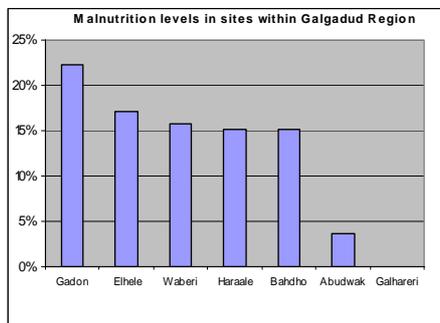
Borrowing and purchase of food on credit are the main coping strategies adopted (refer to chart) and have probably prevented further increase in malnutrition. Distress coping strategies such as skipping entire days without meals (7% of households) and reducing the number of meals taken per day (29%) may have contributed to the critical level of acute malnutrition. [Further analysis ongoing].



Based on the findings, the assessment team recommends initiation of projects geared towards peace building and conflict resolution between the warring clans. A secure environment would facilitate intensified livelihood activities, humanitarian support and nutrition assessment which will provide further highlights on the nutrition situation for programming purpose.

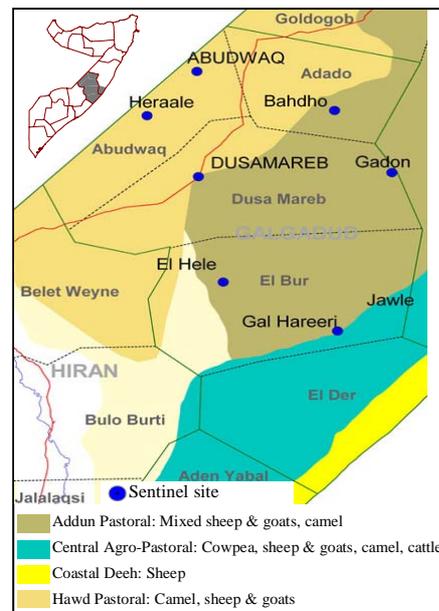
Poor nutrition situation persists in Galgadud

Between 6th and 15th October 2005, FSAU commenced sentinel sites surveillance in Galgadud region. Eight⁴ sites were selected, some of which were inhabited by IDPs or had experienced livestock loss, others because they represented various livelihood groups. (see map).⁵

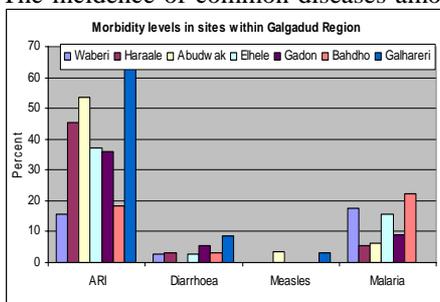


Sites with high proportions of non-residents Gadon (36% IDPs), Elhele (49% internal migrants) and Waberi (almost all) had the highest levels of malnutrition.

Abudwak reported the lowest malnutrition while Galhareri reported zero malnutrition, although both reported recent measles cases. Food security within the Central Agropastoral livelihood zone has been good, a factor that partly explains the good nutritional situation observed in Galhareri.



The incidence of common diseases among underfives was high with 53.8% having suffered one or more illnesses two weeks prior to the assessment. ARI was the most prevalent disease. Malaria prevalence was also high in Waberi, Elhele and Bahdho. Among the 128 women assessed 12.5% were malnourished⁶. The majority of the malnourished were pregnant women.

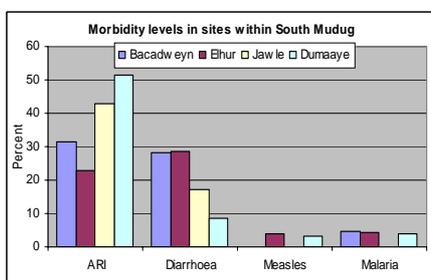


Cereals, sugar, milk and oil were the commonly consumed food groups in both regions. Vegetables, meats, fruits and tubers were consumed by only a minority. Fish was not consumed at all. In Gadon, Bahdho and Haraale children had not consumed a diversified⁷ diet in the past twenty four hours.

Galgadud region has experienced food insecurity due to a prolonged drought. The population is now gradually recovering following a good 2004/2005 Gu season which provided some relief. The 2004/2005 Deyr rains have set in early with the exception of East of Dhusamareb area. Pasture availability is good and milk availability is improving. However cereal prices are increasing. In October 2005, SRCS opened an MCH in Abudwak town, while COOPI undertook livestock related interventions. Qualitative data further indicated that the security situation has slightly improved in the region with the introduction of Sharia courts in early 2005.

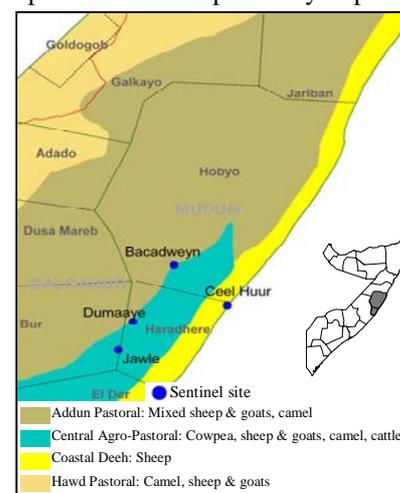
The nutrition situation in still remains poor and slightly better than the usual range. The improving food security situation, access to health facilities, security situation and ongoing humanitarian interventions are all expected to further positively impact on the nutrition well being of the population. Close monitoring of the situation will continue.

Nutrition situation within usual range in South Mudug



Between 6th and 15th October 2005, FSAU commenced sentinel sites surveillance in South Mudug area. Four⁸ sites were selected based on reports of displacement and malnutrition. (See map).⁹

The malnutrition levels indicate a good nutritional situation. Bacadweyn and Jawle

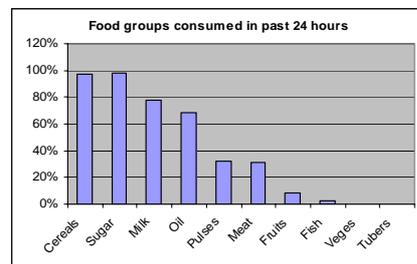


⁴ The sites are Waberi, Haraale, Abudwak, Elhele, Gadon, Bahdho and Galhareri.
⁵ Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from randomly selected households in each site. A minimum of 35 under-five children were targeted and assessed in each site, while a minimum of 30 households were targeted for mortality data collection.
⁶ MUAC <23 cm among pregnant women; <18.5 cm among lactating mothers as well as those neither pregnant nor lactating
⁷ Children who had consumed three or more food groups.
⁸ The sites are Bacadweyn, Elhur, Jawle and Dumaaye.
⁹ Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from randomly selected households in each site. A minimum of 35 under-five children were targeted and assessed in each site, while a minimum of 30 households were targeted for mortality data collection.

reported malnutrition levels of 3.1% and 2.9% respectively while Elhur and Dumaaye sites reported zero malnutrition, although the latter two sites reported cases of measles. The incidence of common diseases among underfives was high with 69.3% having suffered one or more illnesses two weeks prior to the assessment. ARI was the most prevalent disease. Diarrhoea was particularly high within Bacadweyn (28.1%) and Elhur (28.6%) sites. Among the 67 women assessed, 7.5% were malnourished (MUAC). About 55% of the malnourished women were pregnant.

Cereals, sugar, milk and oil were the commonly consumed food groups in the region. Micronutrients rich foods like fruits, vegetables and fish were seldom consumed. Despite high fish availability in the especially in the coastal Dheeh livelihood zone, the consumption was negligible.

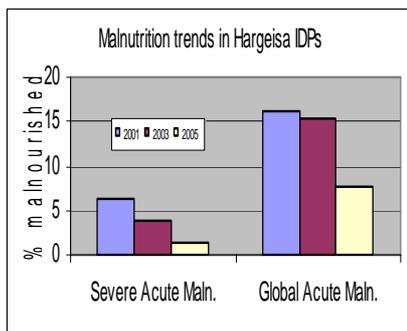
South Mudug has remained relatively food secure. The 2004/2005 Deyr rains have set in early in the area. Pasture availability is good and milk availability is improving. However cereal prices are increasing. In October 2005, CARE distributed food in Eldhere and Haradheere Districts while VSF undertook livestock related interventions in South Mudug.



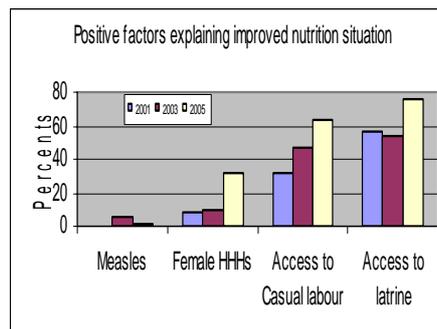
The nutrition situation in South Mudug is good and within the usual range. However, the high disease incidence especially for diarrhoea and reported measles cases raises concern. Close monitoring of the situation will continue.

HARGEISA: An improvement in nutrition status among IDPs in Hargeisa

An analysis of the past nutrition survey results from Hargeisa returnee/IDPs camps shows significant changes in nutrition situation and livelihood factors over the last four years from a critical Global Acute Malnutrition (WHZ<-2 or oedema) of 16.3 in 2001 and 15.3 in 2003 to current levels (7.6%). Severe Acute Malnutrition (WHZ<-3 or oedema) also reduced from 6.4% in 2001 and 3.8% in 2003 to 1.3% this year. There was also a significant increase in the proportion of returnee/IDP households accessing



casual labour from 31% in 2001 to 64% in 2005 (see graph). There was also a significant decline in the incidences of measles: from 5.3% in 2003 to 1.6% in October 2005. Similarly, access to sanitary facility (toilets) significantly improved from 54% in 2003 to 75% in 2005. The 2005 survey also notes significant positive changes in the provision of basic social



services by local authorities and humanitarian agencies when compared to previous years (FSAU September Nutrition Update). The resettlement population also currently reports more diversified diet than in the previous surveys.

Some factors that may continue to negatively affect nutrition situation. Both previous and current surveys still indicate high mortality rates (CMR and U5MR remained almost constant) and poor morbidity patterns (see September Nutrition Update). Coverage of measles immunization also declined from 54-62% in 2001/2003 to less than half (45%) in 2005, as was the case with vitamin A supplementation coverage that dropped over the last four years from 75% in 2001 to 54% in 2005.

Recent publications

- o FSAU Food Security and Nutrition October 2005 Monthly Brief
- o FSAU/FEWSNET Market Data Update, October 12 2005
- o FSAU/FEWSNET Climate Data Update, October 12 2005
- o FSAU Technical Series Report, No IV.5, 2005 Post GU Analysis, September1, 2005)
- o "Conflict and Drought Induced Displacement – Qansah – Dhere and Dinsor Towns and Misra Village in Bay Region", Joint Assessment Field Report, OCHA, UNICEF, WFP 22th-27th, August 2005

This 'Nutrition Update', along with other relevant materials, is available on FSAU's website: www.fsau.org



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