

Somalia: Overview of Food Security

Update # 1

WFP RAM | Food security analysis



Research, Assessment and Monitoring (Somalia CO & RBN)

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Highlights



Food insecurity is dire in the country as nearly 3.5 million people face acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or worse) during October—December 2021 period. An estimated 1.2 million children under the age of five are likely to be malnourished ([FSNAU 2021](#)), including 231,00 SAM cases.



Prices of locally produced maize and sorghum increased atypically in the last three months despite main “Gu” harvests in July. This was due to reduced availabilities from the below average cereal production in 2021. Prices of local cereals and imported food were significantly above the 2016-2020 five year average.



Thousands are facing mild to moderate drought conditions that has depleted water and pasture resources. The most affected regions are Middle juba, Gedo and parts of Bay and Bakool. The drought conditions are expected to persist in many parts of the country until early 2022 ([FAOSWALIM](#), AUG 2021).



Reduced availability and access to food is expected because of below-average Gu production and the anticipated poor production during Deyr season due to forecasted below-average rains. Milk production is also expected to be significantly below average.



2.9675 million people are internally displaced in Somalia, of which [574,000](#) are new IDPs between January and August 2021 (50% happened in April). The main causes of new displacements were conflict/insecurity (75%), drought (16%), and floods (10%).

Context:

The humanitarian situation in Somalia is among the most complex and protracted emergencies globally. The population is exposed to multiple hazards and shocks, particularly recurrent droughts and floods, which have increased in frequency and severity because of seasonal climate variability. In addition, there are economic shocks, conflict, insecurity and inter-communal violence which collectively continue to restrict livelihoods, trade and market functioning while contributing to population displacements, vicious cycle of poverty and vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity. Moreover, inadequate enforcement of disaster risk management and mitigation policies aimed at addressing climate change impacts to help build household and community resilience remain a critical gap. At local community level, there are weak governance structures, lack of basic services, financial, technical and informational resources necessary to build resilience to food insecurity.



WFP | Photo gallery



Food and nutrition insecurity



15.7 Million

Estimated Population of Somalia

UNOCHA / WHO 2021



5.9 Million

People in Need of Humanitarian Assistance

UNOCHA Sept 2021



3.5 Million

People in high acute food insecurity (IPC3+) of whom 640,730 are in Emergency

FAO/FSNAU Sept 2021



2.97 Million

People internally displaced by disasters and conflict
Majority are poor with limited assets & few income earning opportunities.

UNHCR 2021



2.2 Million

People assisted through WFP Strategic Outcome 1 in August 2021.
FSC assisted 2,276,147 people out of 2,826,500 target (81% achievement)

Somalia Food Cluster 2021

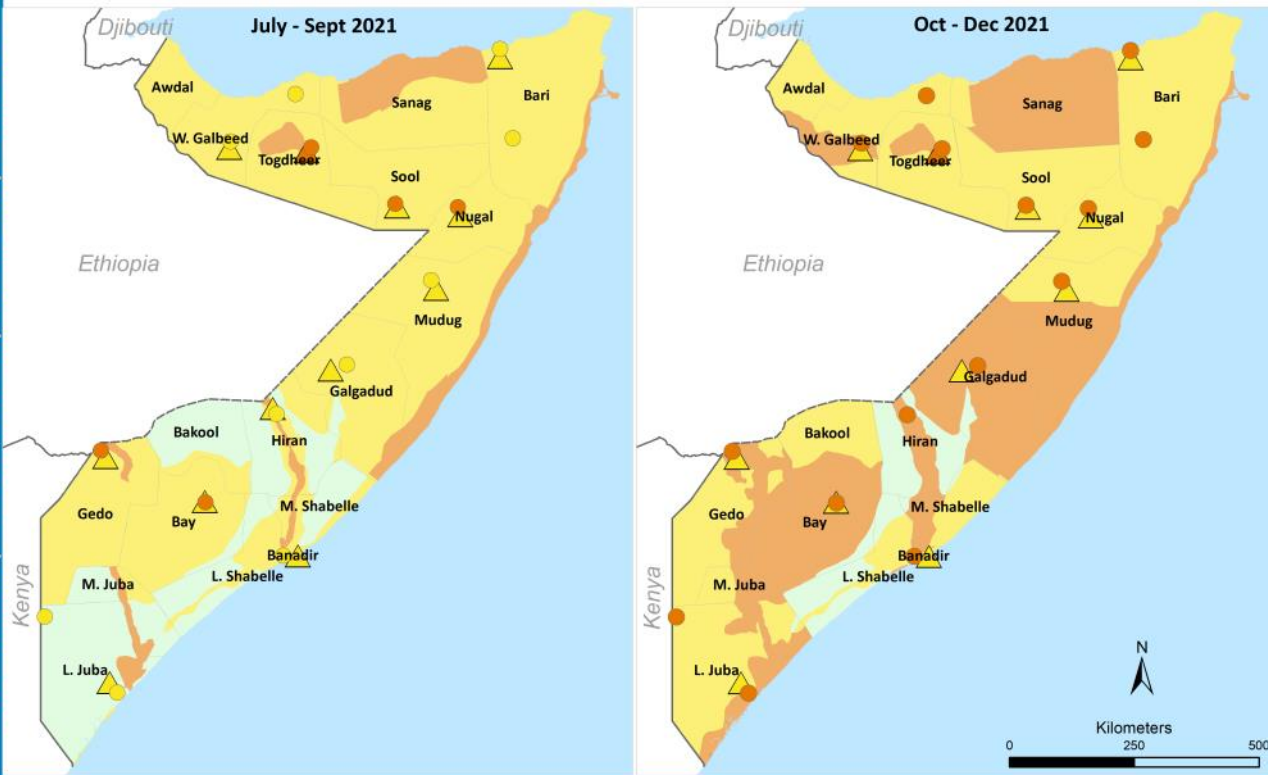


574 Thousand

New displacement in 2021's first 8 months
Mainly from conflict/insecurity, drought and floods.

UNHCR 2021

Map 1: Rural, Urban and IDP: Current Food security outcome July—September 2021 and October-December 2021



IPC phases

- No information
- No/Minimal food insecurity
- Stressed
- Crisis
- Emergency
- Famine

IDP sites (Food security)

- Stressed
- Crisis

Urban centres (Food security)

- Stressed
- Crisis

2.97 Million IDPs

25,368 Refugees

Data sources
Food security: IPC & FSNAU (Current: July-September & Projection (October-December 2021)
IDPs: FSNAU 2020/2021 population estimation
Refugees: UNHCR (as of 31st May 2021)

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

@ September 2021

In the presence of humanitarian assistance, more than 2.2 million people were in Crisis (IPC 3 and above) between July and September 2021 with additional 3.4 million people in stressed (IPC 2).

From October to December 2021, food insecurity is projected to deteriorate due to the impacts of expected below-average 2021 *Deyr* (October-December) season rains, continued insecurity and high food prices, and low availability of milk and agricultural casual labour opportunities. According to IPC, an estimated 3.5 million people will face high acute food insecurity (IPC3+) through December 2021 in the absence of sustained humanitarian assistance. Of these, nearly 640,730 will be in Emergency. An additional 3.7 million people are expected to be Stressed (IPC Phase 2).

The malnutrition situation in Somalia sustained serious classification (11.1% GAM rate) from the last IPC Nutrition analysis. An estimated 1.2 million children under the age of five years will likely face acute malnutrition between August 2021 and July 2022, including 213,400 who are severely malnourished.

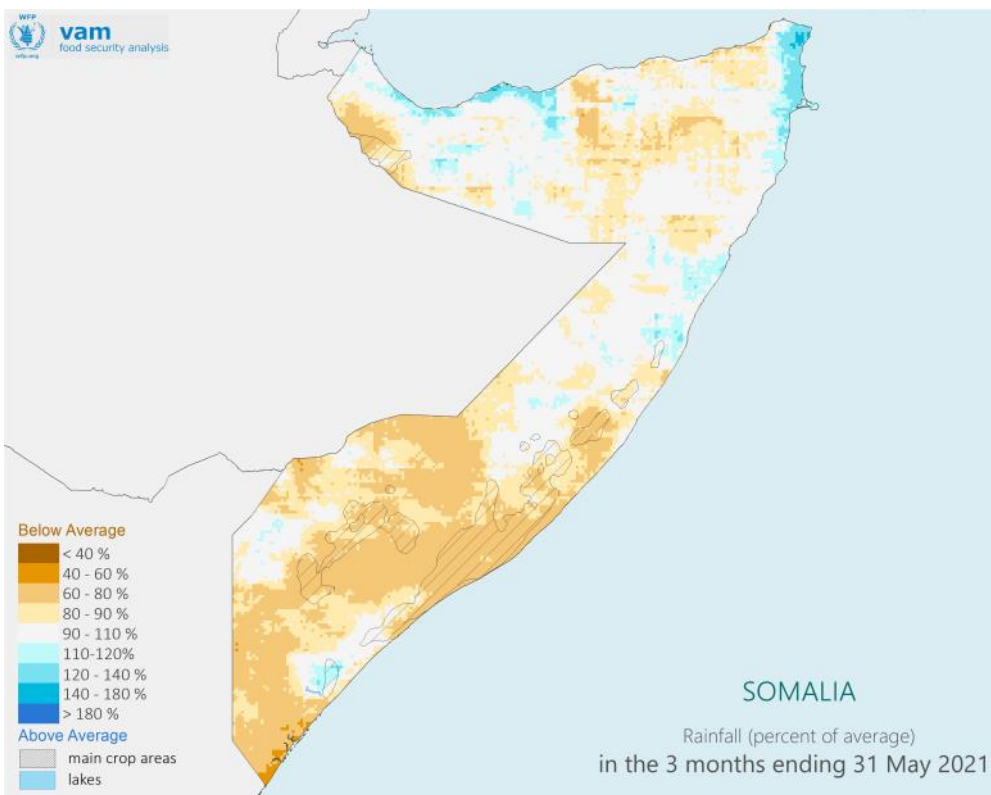


Rainfall performance and soil moisture conditions

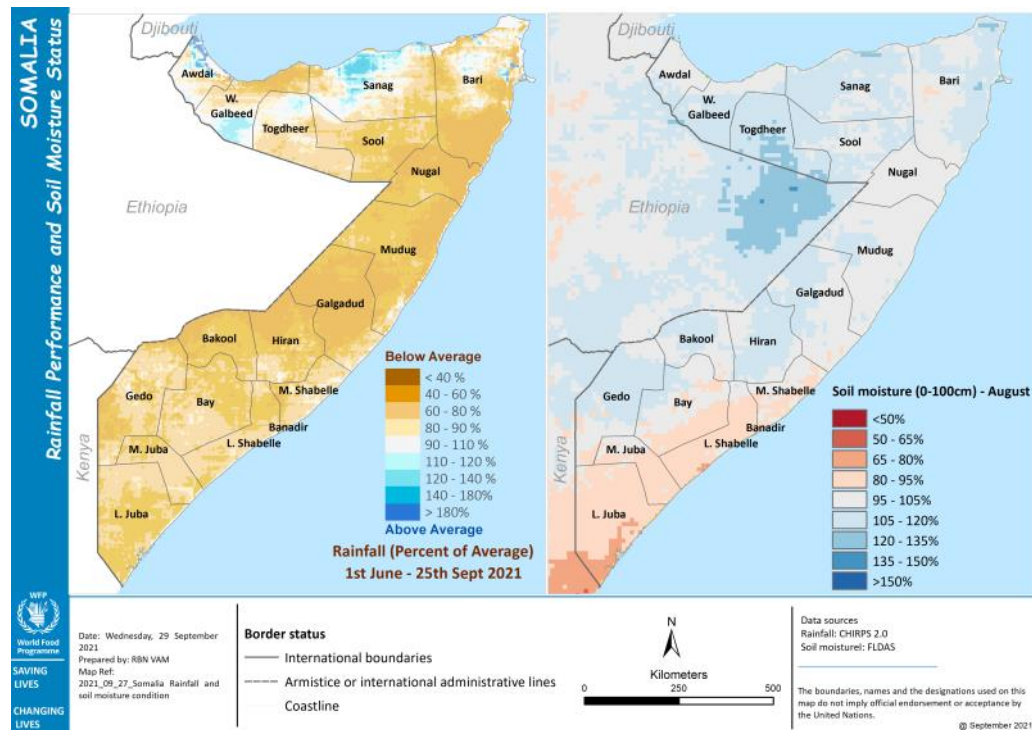
Somalia has faced two consecutive poor rainy seasons since late 2020 with varying implications on socio-economics and production. The March-April-May 2021 Gu rains were insufficient, poorly distributed in space and time, and ended earlier than normal in most areas (map 3).

Thereafter, dry and hot weather followed particularly in the south and central regions while parts of the north received the June – September rains. The cumulative rainfall over the period 1st June to 25th September has been above-average in isolated areas in the north due to June-September rains. The rest of the country has remained generally dry and hot (map 4).

Map 3: Rainfall % of normal, Mar—May 21 (change with proper colour code)



Map 2: Rainfall performance and Soil Moisture Status



The poor Gu rains, early cessation followed by dry-hot weather since June led to deteriorating soil moisture particularly in southern areas. By August 2021, large areas of Shabelle and Juba regions including border areas with Kenya indicated below-average soil moisture situation (map 3).

The below-average GU rains in terms of the onset, totals, spatial and temporal distribution and cession hampered rangeland and food production especially in the most affected in southern, central and north-eastern regions. The cropped zones exhibited below-average condition with southern parts being highly affected. The worst affected areas are in Gedo, Middle Juba, Parts of Bakool and Bay, that are currently experiencing moderate drought conditions. Gu crop production is therefore estimated to be 30-40 percent below the long-term average (FEWSNET).

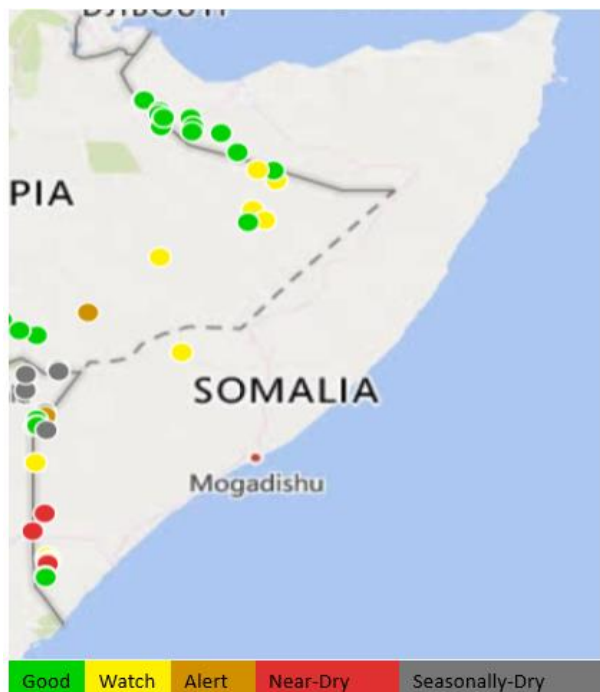


Crop, pasture and water conditions

By end of August, the vegetation condition was near-normal in most areas of central and parts of south and above-average in parts of the north given the June - September seasonal rains. On the contrary, vegetation deterioration continued in parts of the south (Map 4). Most surface water points in the south are nearly dry or seasonally dry according to the FewNet water point monitoring system (Map 5).

Deteriorating vegetation and water resources has implications on livestock grazing resources. As a result, the livestock body condition and productivity in these areas will continue to worsen impacting on consumption and incomes of pastoralist and agro-pastoralist households. In addition, livestock outmigration in search of water and pasture will continue before the October -December Deyr rains alleviates the situation, increasing conflicts over resources.

Map 5: Status of surface water points, 27th Sept 2021

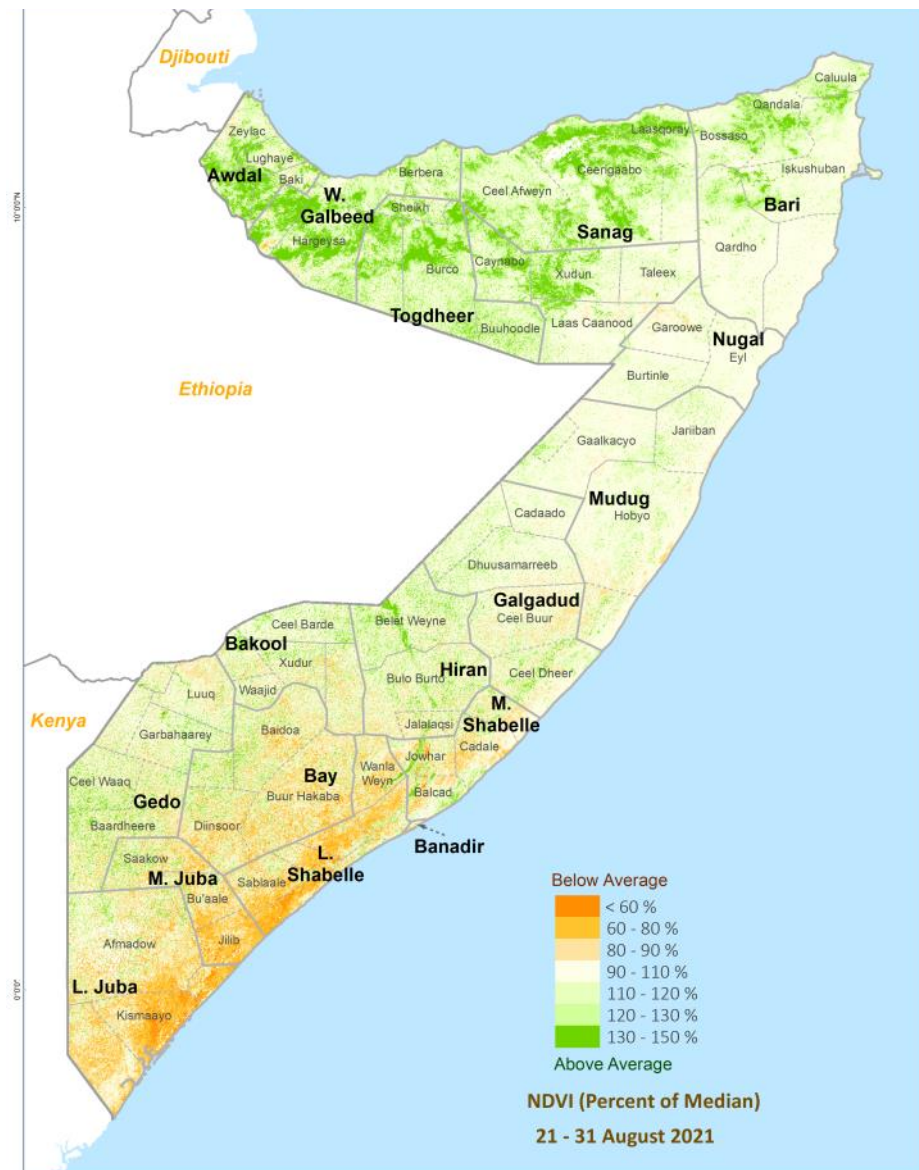


Preliminary indications are that mild to moderate drought conditions might persist until early 2022. Subsurface water and pasture conditions are unfavourable and inadequate in Gedo, Middle Juba, Parts of Bakool and Bay.



A lady bowls out the unclean water from a pool at a riverbed near Doolow, a drought-hit area in Somalia (Xinhua/Sun Ruibo)

Map 4: Vegetation status, 21-31 August 2021



Created by: RBN RAM
Map Reference: 2021_09_27_Somalia_vegetation_status, 21-31 August 2021



The designations and names used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of UN concerning the legal or constitutional status of any country, territory, city or sea, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

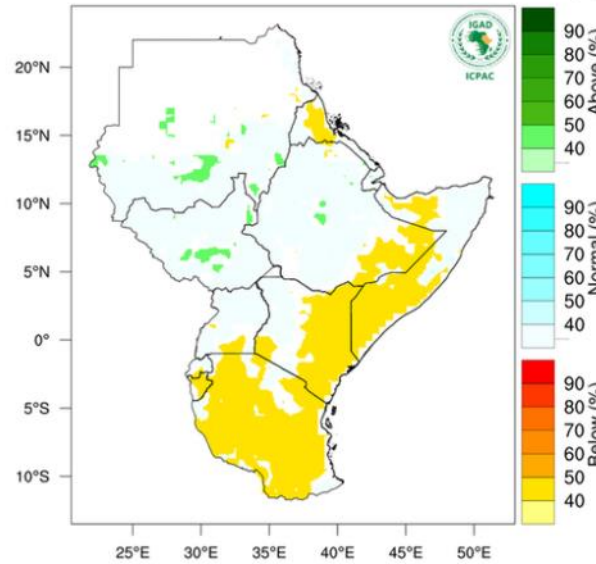


Seasonal rainfall forecast

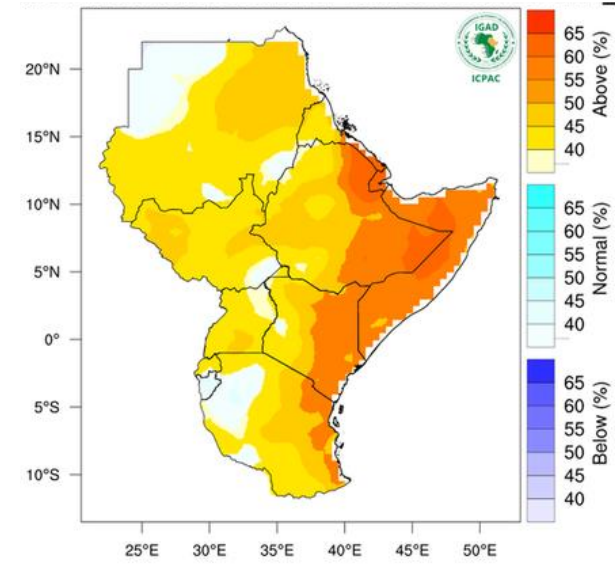
According to [FAOSWALIM](#), the 2021 Deyr rains have kicked off in the northern regions of Somaliland and Puntland that recorded moderate amounts of rainfall during the first week of October.

However, a forecast of weak La Nina and weakening negative Indian Ocean Dipole conditions means that Somalia will most likely experience a third consecutive below-average rainfall season from Mid-October to December 2021 Deyr period ([IGAD/ICPAC](#), Map 6). The situation will be the worse in Middle juba, Gedo and parts of Bay and Bakool that are currently experiencing mild to moderate drought conditions ([FEWSNET 2021](#)). Thousands of people are currently facing moderate to severe water shortage in the above affected areas. The situation is projected to persist until early 2022 ([FAOSWALIM](#)). Warmer than usual conditions were expected over the whole country (Map 7).

Map 6: Rainfall probabilistic forecast Oct-Dec 2021



Map 7: Temperature probabilistic forecast Oct-Dec 2021



Source: [IGAD/ICPAC 2021](#)



A boy washes his feet on the dried-up riverbed in Doolow, Somalia (Xinhua/Sun Ruiبو)



A child stands next to empty containers lined up by people to collect water from a tanker at an IDP camp in Sool region, Somali, photo by Joe English/NICEF



Population movement, displacement and floods

According to UNHCR, approximately 2.97 million IDPs are in Somalia. Of these, nearly 574,000 people were newly displaced from January to August 2021. Majority of the displaced within the year ending August were due to conflict/ insecurity (413,000), drought related (90,000), and floods (59,000). More than 50% (250,000) of the new displacements happened in April 2021 due to insecurity while floods related displacement occurred in May. The priority for the displaced is food, livelihood support and shelter (Fig. 1 & 2).

Fig. 1: Reason for departure

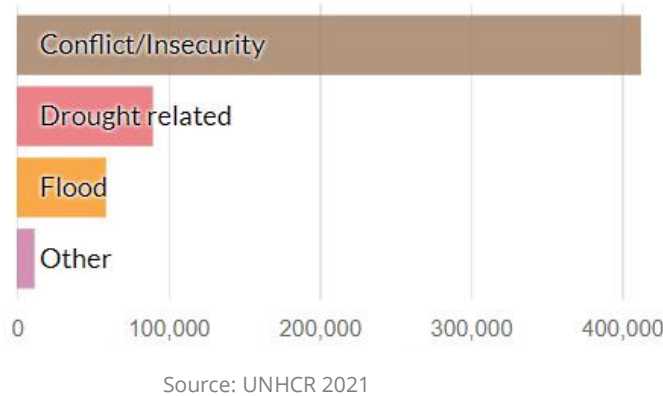


Fig. 2: Priority of the displaced on arrival

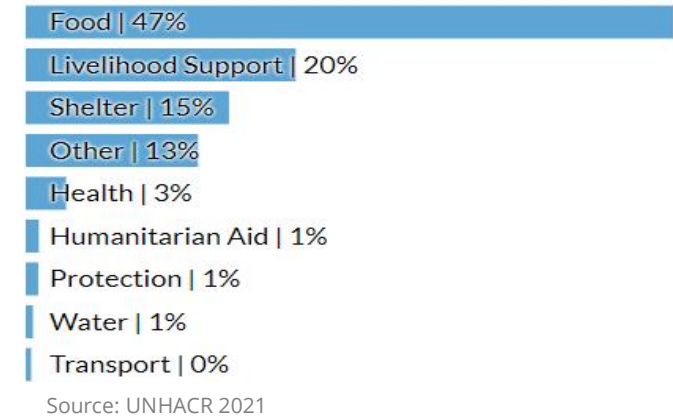
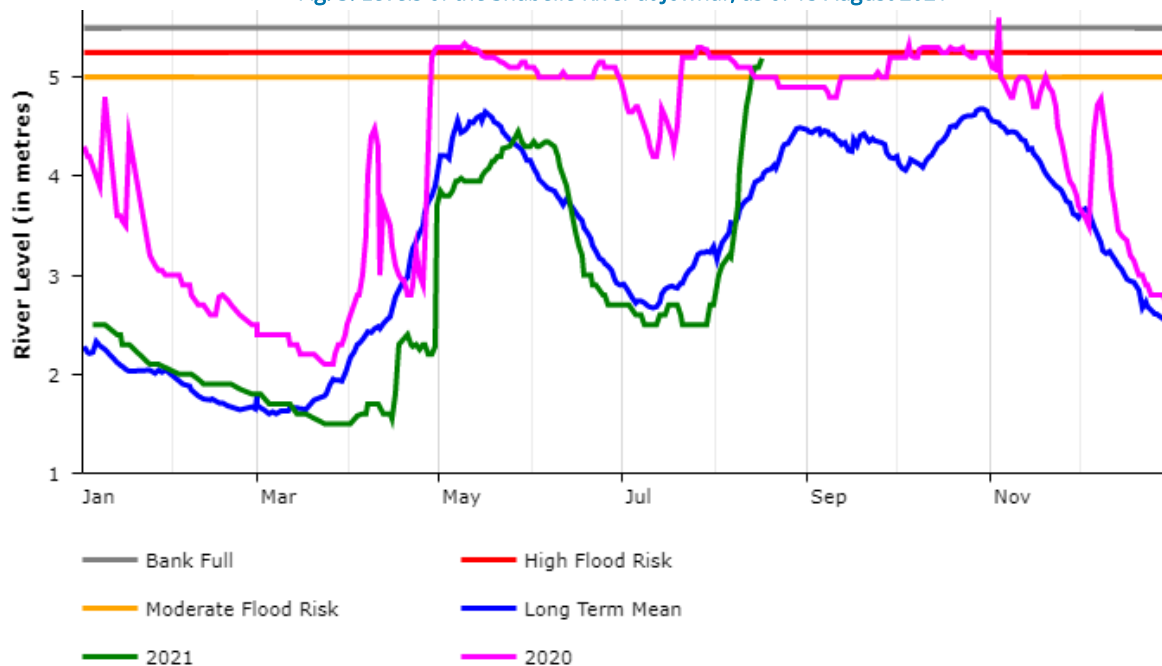


Fig. 3: Levels of the Shabelle River at Jowhar, as of 15 August 2021



Source: FAO SWALIM

Gu' seasonal rains, although below average, caused localized episodic flooding and damages in late April and May 2021 in the south (Hiraan and Middle Shabelle), affecting mostly Shabelle riverine and urban populations through destruction of cropped farmlands, disruption of transport routes and markets. Floods in Jowhar and Belet Weyne towns displaced over 88,000 people and destroyed over 42,000 hectares of farmland.

Juba and Shabelle river levels remained significantly below average since mid-June but have started to rise at the beginning of August following moderate rains in the Ethiopian highlands (Fig 8). According to FAOSWALIM, by mid August 2021, the Shabelle River at Jowhar was above moderate risk level (5 metres) standing at 5.10 metres, its record highest in 2021 against a high risk level of 5.25 metres (Fig. 3). According to FEWSNET, flooding along the Juba River has been less significant due to the repair of most river breakages.

The risk of floods is likely in the next three months in the areas along the Shabelle River because of unrepaired, open river breakages.



Markets and food prices

June - August 2021

The Somali/land shilling has been generally stable in the last one year in the South, Central and Northwest markets. However, the Somali Shilling (SoSh) continued to depreciate in Northeast markets due to increased supply and reduced demand of the local currency notes. Imported food prices were higher in most markets in August 2021, driven by increased global food prices, high freight costs and logistical hurdles. Monetary inflation in Northeast markets exacerbated imported food and non-food prices. Prices of locally produced maize and sorghum increased unseasonably in most markets, including in Mogadishu from May through August. This was despite the start of the main “Gu” harvest in July, which is estimated to be 30 to 40 percent below average due to erratic rains and insecurity. At the same time, food prices from June trended above of one year earlier and the five year average due to reduced availabilities from the below average cereal production in 2020 and 2021 (Fig. 4-6). Food inflation were negative or near zero in the first half of the year but jumped from July to 1.4% and then rapidly accelerated to 5.9% following poor Gu harvests in July. Food inflation is projected to accelerate to double digits by the end of the year. The situation will be worse during January-March 2022 dry season which typically corresponds to the peak of the dry season.

Fig. 4: Food Inflation trends in Somalia

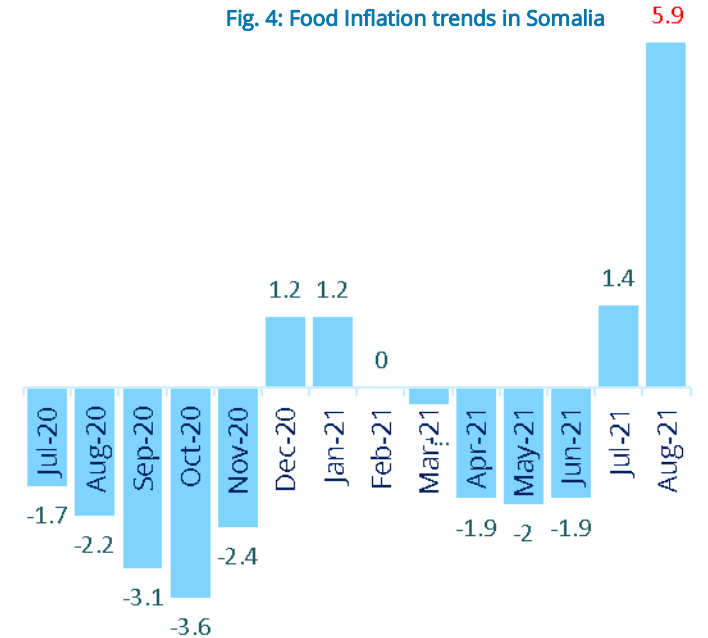


Fig. 5: Sorghum prices (SoShs/kg)

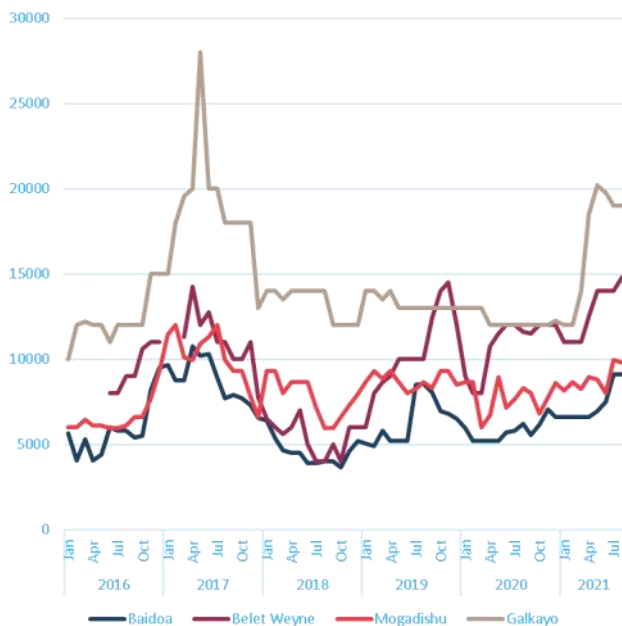
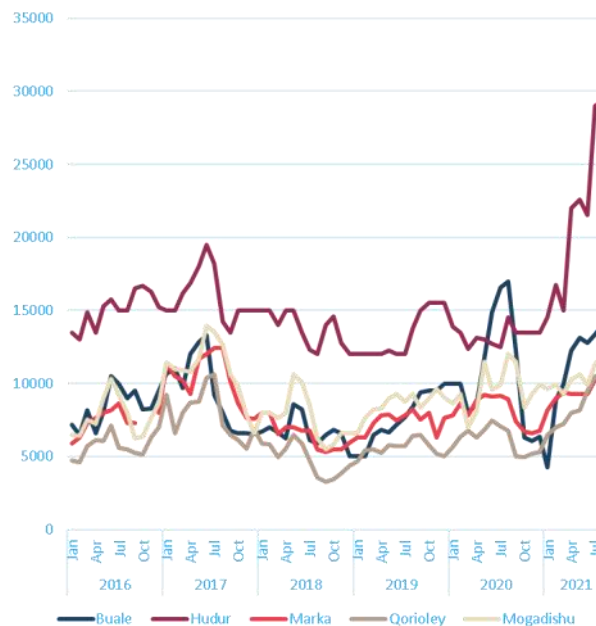


Fig. 6: Sorghum prices (SoShs/kg)



September - December 2021

The Somali/land shilling exchange rate against the USD is likely to remain stable in most markets, partly boosted by continued livestock exports. However, exchange rate fluctuations is expected in northeast markets due to continued increased money supply.

Below average 2021 Gu harvests and expected below average 2021 Deyr crop production will likely tighten domestic cereal supply and put upward pressure on prices. Imported food prices are expected to trend higher month-on-month through December 2021 because of increased international food prices.

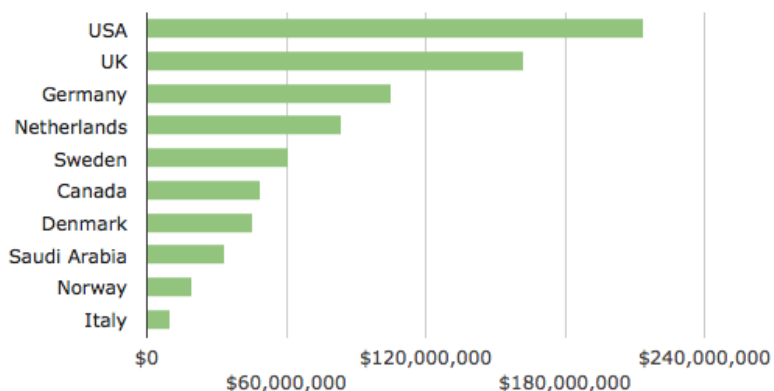


Covid-19, diaspora remittances, poverty and food insecurity

According to [Oxfam](#), the annual remittance receipts to Somalia is approximately \$1.3 billion, exceeding all humanitarian and development assistance to the country and comprising between 25 and 40 percent of the GDP- implying remittance remain a backbone of the Somalia economy. Remittances were very critical for family survival during the 2011 famine. About [40 per cent](#) of families rely on remittances from their relatives living abroad. Remittance flows to Somalia during the COVID-19 pandemic decreased by 61 per cent in 2020, the equivalent to USD 289 ([IOM](#)). Notably, the study found that 67 percent of Somalis receiving money from relatives abroad are unemployed, while for 80 per cent, remittance 50% of their income making the situation even more grimier and exacerbating household financial stress. Most families use the cash received to meet varying family needs primary buying food. According to [FSNAU](#), the proportion of households who reported receiving remittances in 2021 was fairly low (<10%) among most population groups surveyed. Exceptions were in Mogadishu urban (23%), Hargeisa urban (19%), rural Bay Agropastoral(13%), and Galkayo urban (10%). A majority of recipients (60-69%) reported at least 10-20% decline in amounts received compared to normal periods. These findings mean that with families receiving less money from remittance than before the pandemic, its much more difficult afford food from the markets.

Reduction in remittances resulted in economic shocks and decline real GDP growth at the national level (Fig. 8) causing unemployment and income losses among households which exuberated food insecurity. According to [ADB](#), the real GDP, which grew 2.9% in 2019, shrank by 1.5% in 2020, mainly because of COVID-19 containment measures such as travel restrictions and supply and value chain disruptions. Growth was also dented by reduced foreign direct investment, as investors shied away during contentious elections that were postponed, a shrinkage in remittances because of the global recession, and bans on livestock exports by the Gulf countries. Its estimated that seven out of ten Somalis live below the poverty line (than \$1.90) per day, and the COVID-19 crisis likely increased poverty, in line with the 4.4% decline in real per capita income. Africa Development Bank predicts that Somalia's GDP will likely recover to 2.9% in 2021 and 3.2% in 2022, which is still below pre- COVID-19 projections. This is despite a forecasted decline in development assistance and remittances, due to COVID-19. Poverty and unemployment are also expected to decrease in 2021 due to reduced remittances, which will disproportionately affect women, youth, and internally displaced persons.

Fig. 7: Estimates of remittances to Somalia, by sending country



Source: Oxfam 2013, all figures in US\$

Fig. 8: Somalia Real GDP growth rate (%)



Source: ADB, 2021





Desert locusts

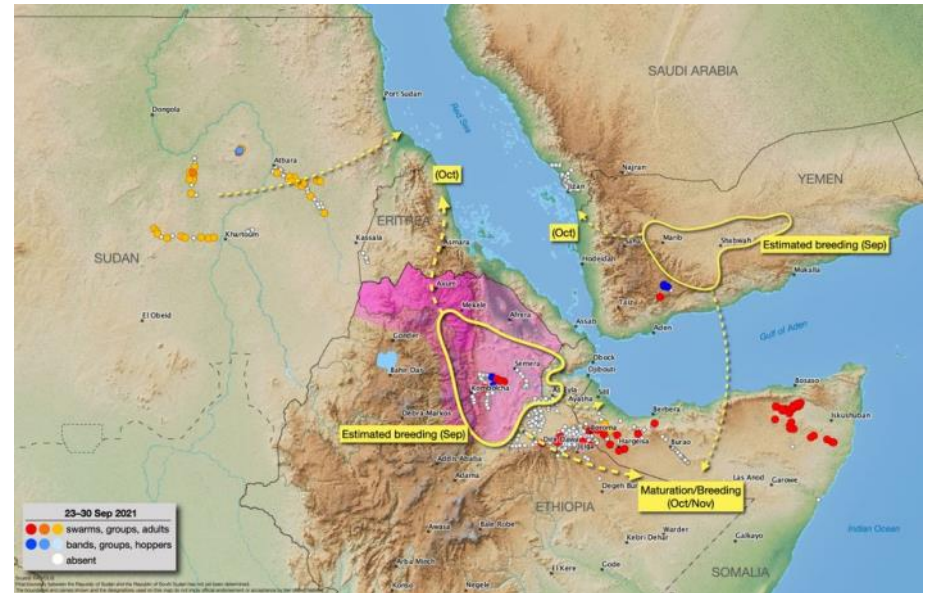
The prevailing dry conditions and ongoing control measures in northern Somalia significantly reduced desert locust infestation in the country. However, a few remnant immature swarms persist in the northwest and northeast parts of Somalia.

In the context of limited surveillance and control operations, new swarms are expected in northern Somalia especially where rains will have started in October/November. This will likely support new generation as they mature and lay eggs before the end of the year (Map 8).

While the scale and impacts of desert locusts have significantly been lower than a year ago, limited survey and control in the inaccessible conflict affected and insecure areas of Afar, Amhara and Tigray in Ethiopia might lead to desert locust migration into Somalia. In addition, there is a likely potential risk of migration from Yemen to northern Somalia especially from compromised control zones (FAO).

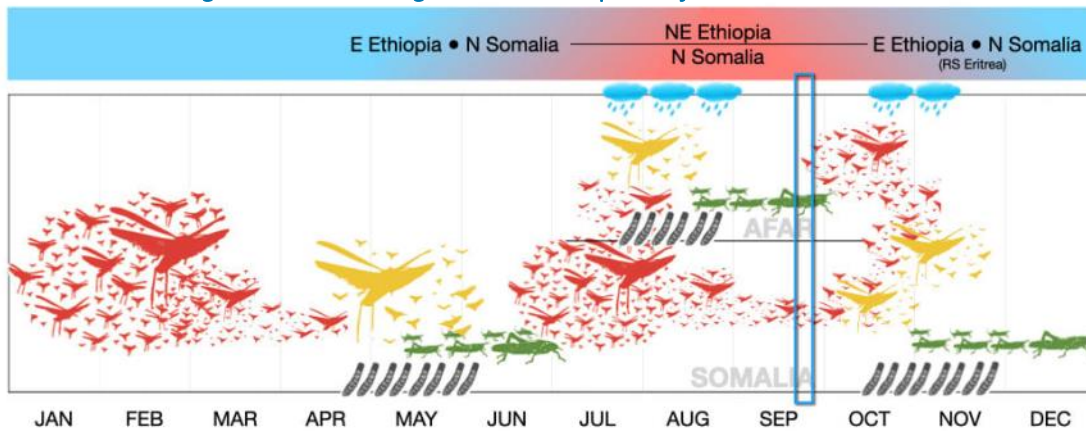
The current field operations and surveillance in northern Somalia should be scaled up.

Map 8: Desert locust presence



Source: FAO (1 October 2021)

Figure 7: Desert locust growth and development cycles



Source: FAO (23 September 2021)



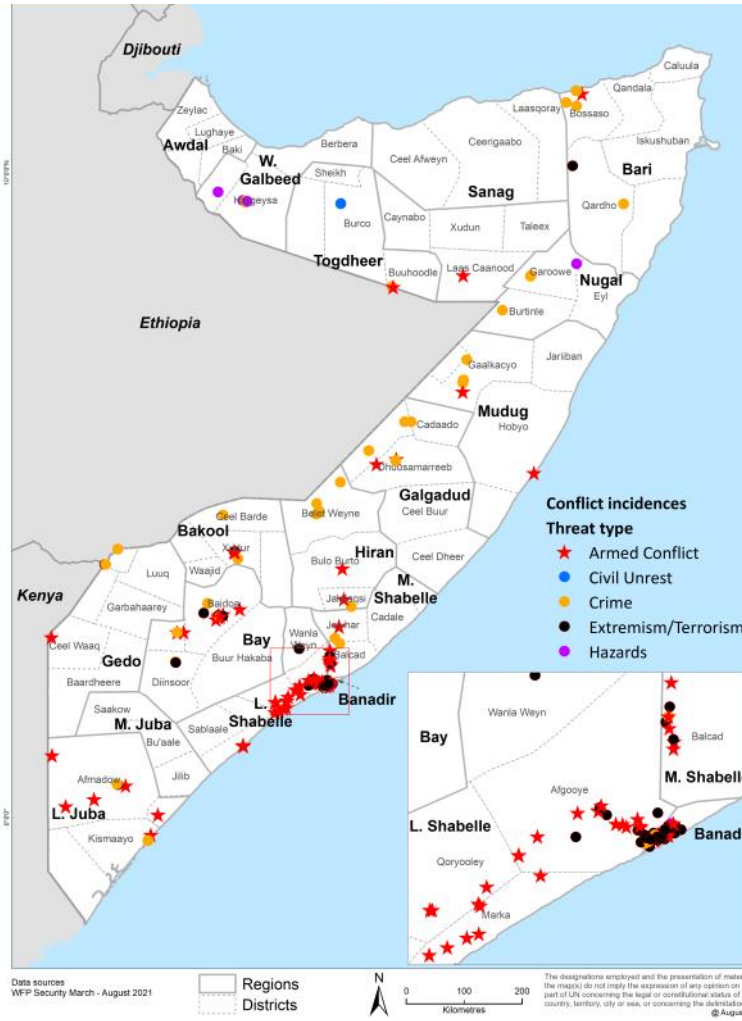
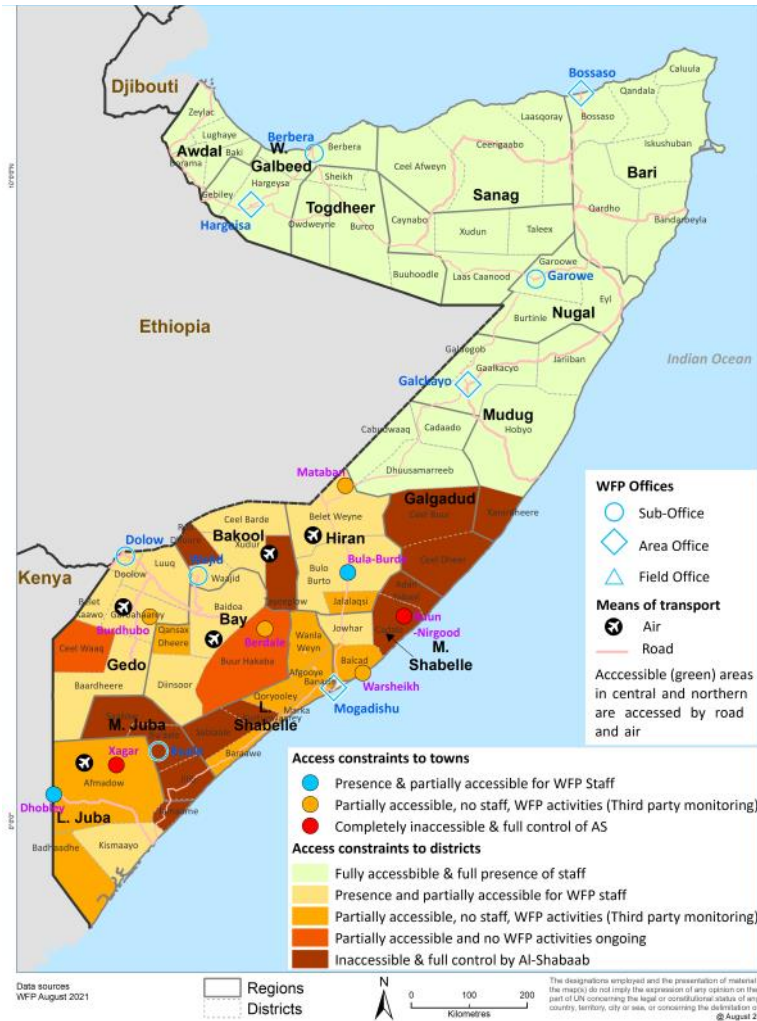
Source: FAO (23 September 2021)



Access constraints and security hotspots

Map 9: Access constraints to WFP operations

Map 10: Access constraints to WFP operations



The overall security situation in South-Central Somalia remains volatile – most parts continue to experience little if none, authoritative government presence which is an incentive for lawlessness, sporadic armed conflicts, inter clan rivalry, militia road blockades and conflict of over water points and grazing lands.

As such, South/Central Somalia remains in a complex and protracted emergency, with limited humanitarian access and reduced operational capacity and widespread displacement (map 10).

Humanitarian agencies including WFP have no access in parts of Galmudug, Middle Shabelle, Lower Shabelle and Middle Juba. Partial access is also in parts of Gedo and Bay regions. However, humanitarian access situation is normal in upper Mudug, Puntland and Somaliland regions (map 9).



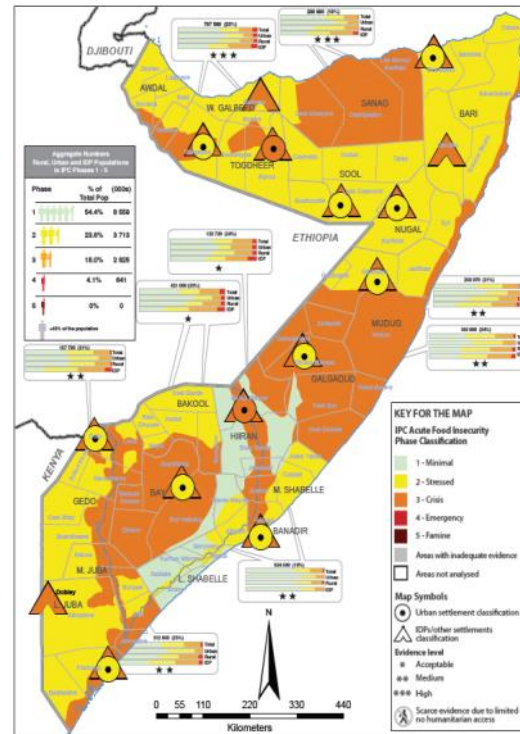
Food security outlook

A deterioration in food and nutrition security situation is projected from October through December 2021 (map 11 & map 12). Several areas in the south, central and northern Somalia are expected to be in crisis food insecurity and malnutrition serious and critical levels as shown in the two maps. Sustained humanitarian assistance is therefore necessary to prevent further deterioration.

Forecast assumptions:

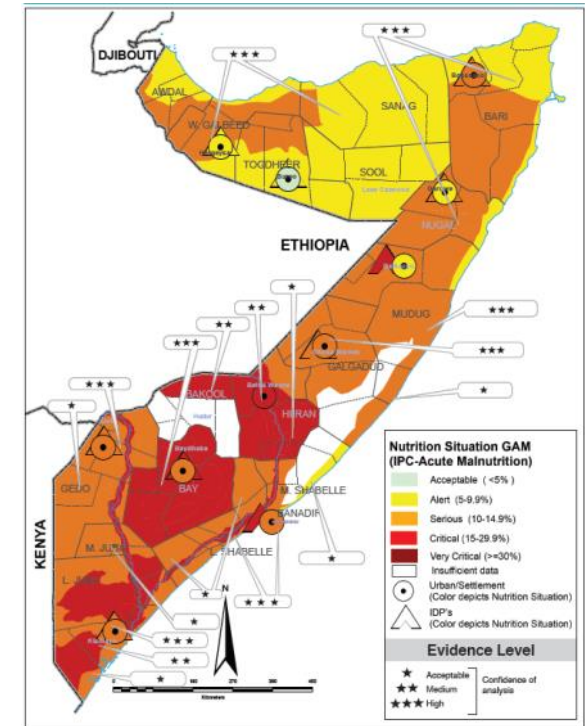
- Forecasted third season of poor rains;
- Below average crop and livestock production during the Deyr season;
- Reduced income from crop and livestock sales;
- Sustained insecurity, political tensions and displacement in southern regions;
- Tight domestic cereal supply and higher international prices to result in increased food prices;
- Higher expenditure on water because of increased water prices;
- Reduced availability of milk for consumption and sale;
- Reduced agricultural casual labour opportunities and house purchasing power.
- Below average livestock body conditions and reduced livestock prices

Map 11: Projected Food security outcome October—December 2021



Source: FSNAU September 2021

Map 12: Projected nutrition situation October—December 2021



Source: FSNAU September 2021



For further information

Regional Bureau Nairobi

Siddharth krishnaswamy siddharth.krishnaswamy@wfp.org
Kennedy Nanga kennedy.nanaga@wfp.org

WFP Somalia Office:

Raul Cumba raul.cumba@wfp.org
Joshua Mesa joshua.mesa@wfp.org

