In the period October - December 2022, about 5.6 million people across Somalia are experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity, classified in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above). Among these, 1.5 million people are classified in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and 214,900 in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5). In the period between January and March 2023, the number of people facing Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) levels of acute food insecurity are expected to increase up to 6.4 million, of which 1.9 million will be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and 322,000 in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5).

Following the commendable response efforts of humanitarian actors and local communities, the food insecurity and acute malnutrition situation has not reached IPC Phase 5 Famine levels in October - December 2022. The underlying crisis however has not improved and even more appalling outcomes are only temporarily averted. Prolonged extreme conditions have resulted in massive population displacement and excess cumulative deaths.

Among anticipated reduction in funding for humanitarian assistance in crucial sectors from April 2023 onwards, approximately 3.8 million people across Somalia, about half the country’s population, are expected to face Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) between April and June 2023. Among these, 2.7 million people are expected to be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and 727,000 in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5).

During this period, Famine (IPC Phase 5) is projected among agropastoral populations in Baidoa and Burhakaba districts and displaced populations in Baidoa town of Bay region and in Mogadishu. These population groups already experiencing very high levels of acute malnutrition and mortality.

According to the country-wide IPC Acute Malnutrition analysis conducted in August 2022, the total estimated acute malnutrition burden for Somalia through July 2023 is approximately 1.8 million children, including 313,550 children who are likely to be severely malnourished.

In addition to the projected Famine (IPC Phase 5) in three areas in April-June 2023, several areas and population groups in central and southern Somalia are at risk of Famine, namely: Hawd Pastoral of Central and Hiraan; Addun Pastoral of Northeast and Central; Coastal Deeh Pastoral of Central; Sorghum High Potential Agropastoral of Middle Shabelle; and IDP settlements in Garowe, Galgacyo, and Dollow.

The level of assistance in most sectors has increased in recent months and is expected to allow a sustained response through March 2023, with humanitarian food assistance in particular currently reaching about 5.8 million people. However, a significant scale down in humanitarian food assistance is expected from April. Moreover, inadequate levels of funding, coverage and outreach in health, WASH and nutrition programmes, which are critical to avert a famine, are also expected.

The conclusions above are based on the latest IPC Acute Food Insecurity and Famine Risk Analyses conducted in November 2022 by technical experts drawn from the government, United Nations agencies, NGOs and technical partners, with the support of the IPC Global Support Unit.

**Key Drivers**

- **Prolonged Drought:** The October-December short rainy season (Deyr) ranges from 25 to 55 percent below average across most parts of Somalia, making this the fifth straight rainy season to fail since 2017. This has led to one of the worst droughts in a decade, causing widespread crop failure and livestock deaths, depriving millions of people of food and income.

- **Conflict:** Increased conflict and insecurity continue to force population displacement, disrupt market access and functionality, impede household access to livelihood opportunities and restrict access to humanitarian assistance, with a risk of potential exclusion of vulnerable groups, especially in central and southern Somalia.

- **High Food and Water Prices:** The urban poor across Somalia – who already spend a disproportionately large amount of their income on food (60-80%) – continue to struggle to feed themselves in the face of rising food and water prices. They have limited room to absorb the impact of further food price increases and have limited opportunities to expand their incomes.

- **Displacement:** One million people have been displaced since January 2022. Displaced populations leave their home and livelihoods to reach overcrowded sites in major urban centres, where the conditions remain dire, despite the scale-up of humanitarian assistance in the past few months.
Famine projected in Bay and Banadir regions | April - June 2023

In the most likely scenario, between April and June 2023, Famine (IPC Phase 5) is projected among agropastoral populations in Baidoa and Burhakaba districts and displaced populations in Baidoa town and Mogadishu. Projected Famine is based on the following assumptions:

- Below average Gu rains: The Gu rainy season is likely to be below normal. According to the latest forecasts, there is a 62% probability that the Gu (April-May) rainfall will be below average, for the sixth consecutive season. Under these conditions, households will not be able to recover from the livestock losses and further reduction of herds is expected. Crop harvest is expected to be limited, not only due to the forecasted below average rainfall, but also due to the lack of seeds, agricultural inputs, and ultimately the lack of food stocks allowing EIPs to return to their villages to cultivate.

- Sustained high prices: The price of water, currently six times higher than in January 2022, will likely remain high. Similarly, prices of food commodities will continue to be influenced by global price levels, which are expected to increase by 15-20% compared to 2021.

- Intensification of conflict: Access to populations in need is expected to be further constrained in the coming months, due to intensification of conflict with non-state actors. The volatile security situation will likely hamper the delivery of humanitarian assistance and services, which will consequently mostly concentrate in the urban centres, such as Baidoa and Mogadishu, thereby further attracting EIPs.

- Increased populations displacements: Drought and conflict are likely to generate more population displacements and inflows to already crowded IDP sites and urban areas.

- Increased morbidity and diseases outbreaks: Due to poor health and WASH conditions in rural areas (especially those not reached by health services), as well as in IDP sites (in particular informal sites and those hosting new arrivals), disease outbreaks may further spread.

- Likely inadequate humanitarian assistance: The level of planned and funded humanitarian food assistance for the period April to June is expected to reach only 31% of the Burhakaba population, 14% of the Baidoa population and 1% of the Mogadishu population, which is highly inadequate. Inadequate levels of funding, coverage and outreach in the health, WASH and nutrition sector are also expected.

Risk of Famine in other areas

In addition to the Famine (IPC Phase 5) projection in three areas in April-June 2023, several areas and population groups in central and southern Somalia face an increased Risk of Famine between April and June 2023, namely: HawdPastoral of Central and Hiraan; AddimPastoral of Northeastern and Central; Coaastal Deeh Pastoral of Central, Sorghum High Potential Agropastoral of Middle Shabelle; and EIP settlements in Garowe, Galgalka and Dowlo.

In these areas, Famine (IPC Phase 5) could materialize between April and June 2023 if: (i) the 2023 Gu rainy season rainfall is significantly below normal, leading to more crop failure and livestock losses; (ii) further population displacements occur towards the already over-crowded IDP sites in urban centres; and (iii) humanitarian assistance access across sectors is unable to reach the country’s most vulnerable populations, due to access constraints and funding limitations. In these areas, Emergency (IPC Phase 4) levels of acute malnutrition and elevated mortality levels already prevail.

When is Famine Classified?

Famine (IPC Phase 5) is the highest phase of the IPC Acute Food Insecurity scale, and is classified when an area has:

- 20% of households facing an extreme lack of food
- 30% of children suffering from acute malnutrition

Deaths of two adults or four children out of every 10,000 people each day due to outright starvation or the interaction of malnutrition and disease

About the IPC Risk of Famine

For the IPC, Risk of Famine refers to a reasonable probability of an area going into Famine in the projected period. While this is not perceived necessarily as the most-likely scenario, it is a scenario that, generally speaking, has a realistic chance of occurring:

- ...complements the Famine and Famine Likely projections of the most likely scenario by providing insights into potential famine if prospects evolve in a worse manner than anticipated.
- ...differs from Famine and Famine Likely projections because it focuses on a worst-case scenario that has a reasonable and realistic chance of happening.
- ...is a state about the potential deterioration of the situation from what is expected. It is not a new classification, and it is not to be accompanied by population estimates.
- ...is an additional assessment that focuses on assessing if the area could realistically go into Famine during the projected period. Not all areas need to undergo assessment for Risk of Famine.

Recommended Response Actions

Urgent lifesaving humanitarian response

Stop and reverse the inexorable deterioration into famine by providing an immediate and coordinated scale-up of the response in the form of critical life-saving assistance in the nutrition, WASH and health sectors as well as in food and cash assistance. Flexible and timely access to life-saving assistance for newly arriving IDPs, including health and nutrition screening and vaccination on arrival, is essential. Priority should also be given to expanding humanitarian access in hard-to-reach areas to deliver these services.

Livelihood support

Considering communities’ significantly diminished resilience, the high vulnerability to shocks and the protracted nature of food insecurity and malnutrition, close collaboration between humanitarian and development stakeholders is needed to tackle the underlying causes of food insecurity and malnutrition and enhance resilience.

Enhanced humanitarian access

The parties to the conflict in Somalia must allow and facilitate rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians throughout the country.

Conclusions of the Famine Review Committee

The Famine Review Committee (FRC) has endorsed the IPC analysis conducted by the Somalia IPC Technical Working Group (TWG) for October-December 2022 and January-March 2023. However, the FRC was unable to endorse a Famine (IPC Phase 5) classification for the three areas between April and June 2023 with a sufficient degree of confidence due to the high degree of uncertainty and volatility. Nevertheless, the FRC encouraged the TWG to publish their projection for April – June 2023 stating clearly and quantifying the assumptions leading to their classification. The FRC is of the opinion that if funding, outreach, management and coverage in all sectors and in particular in health and WASH are not scaled up, famine is a strong possibility and not only in the April-June 2023 period but well beyond that.

Projected acute food insecurity among main livelihood groups

In pastoral areas, given the impact of the ongoing drought and expected below average rainfall, poor households will continue to face major challenges in coping with the situation. Their purchasing power is expected to decline further due to a combination of high cost of water and food, and near exhaustion of the number of savable animals due to distressed sales and excess deaths. Due to reduced income from livestock sales, a significant drop in livestock births, and low availability of milk for both adults and children, these households are expected to face moderate to large food consumption gaps through June 2023.

In agropastoral and rangeland livelihood zones, hit by five consecutive below-average or failed harvests, will likely face another poor harvest during the 2023 Gu season. Poor households, who already sustained substantial crop losses and low income from declining agricultural employment, will face moderate to large food consumption gaps through at least June 2023.
SOMALIA: How Drought and Conflict Drive Acute Food Insecurity in Somalia | December 2022

**What is Drought?**
Drought is a prolonged and widespread deficit in naturally available water supplies that creates multiple stressors across ecosystems and communities. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, drought is a period of drier-than-normal conditions that results in water-related problems. The amount of precipitation at a particular location varies yearly, but the average amount is relatively constant over years. When rainfall is less than normal for weeks to years, streamflows decline, water levels in lakes and reservoirs fall, and the depth of water in wells increases. If dry weather persists and water-supply problems develop, the dry period can become a drought.

**What is Conflict?**
Conflict is a prolonged and widespread deficit in naturally available water supplies that creates multiple stressors across ecosystems and communities. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, drought is a period of drier-than-normal conditions that results in water-related problems. The amount of precipitation at a particular location varies yearly, but the average amount is relatively constant over years. When rainfall is less than normal for weeks to years, streamflows decline, water levels in lakes and reservoirs fall, and the depth of water in wells increases. If dry weather persists and water-supply problems develop, the dry period can become a drought.

**Conflict and Insecurity in Somalia**
Somalia has endured one of the oldest civil wars in Africa and insecurity for over 20 years of crisis. Ongoing armed conflict and recurring humanitarian crises continue to expose Somalis to untold suffering. As of mid-November over 1,150 civilian casualties had been recorded in 2022 alone, according to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNOSOM). Most of these killings are reported as a result of indiscriminate and targeted attacks. Inter-clan and intra-security force violence, often over control of land and revenge killings, also lead to civilian deaths, injuries, and displacement. Somalia’s protracted conflict and insecurity are major compounding factors in the country’s food crisis.

**How Conflict and Insecurity Drive Acute Food Insecurity**

**Population Displacement:** Conflict and insecurity significantly disrupt everyday life and livelihood activities, when households flee their homes into camps or host communities. According to UNHCR, conflict displaced over 530,000 people in 2022 alone. Major displacements in October occurred in Lower Shabelle (33,549), Middle Shabelle (14,680) and Hiraan (14,306) regions mainly due to military incursions.

**Humanitarian Access:** Over 120 humanitarian access incidents have been reported in 2022 alone due to increasing conflict and insecurity. Reported incidents interfere in the implementation of humanitarian operations. Moreover, violence against humanitarian personnel, assets, and facilities have been reported. These incidents restrict access to humanitarian assistance, with a risk of potential exclusion of vulnerable groups, especially in central and southern Somalia.

**Economic Decline:** Conflict and insecurity have also destroyed the country’s infrastructure, stifled the economy and hindered the state’s capacity to provide basic services, such as health care and education. Unemployment or underemployment depletes family assets, sows discontent, and breeds conflicts.

**ARRIVALS: Conflict-Induced Population Displacement | January - October 2022**

**COMPARISON: Population Displacement 2021 and 2022**

**How Drought Drives Acute Food Insecurity in Somalia**
Prolonged and recurrent droughts are not new to Somalia and are a major driver of acute food insecurity in the Horn of Africa. Here is how the current spate of drought is depriving millions of people of access to adequate food:

1. **1 Million People Displaced**
   - As a result of the devastating and prolonged drought in Somalia, 1 million people have been forced to flee their homes to safer havens since January 2021. The highest displacements in October owing to drought were recorded in Bakool (34,819), Lower Shabelle (24,599), Bay (15,778) and Lower Juba (9,708) regions.

2. **3 Million Livestock Deaths**
   - Poor pasture conditions and water scarcity resulting from drought have led to the deaths of up to 3 million livestock since July 2021, devastating livelihoods for pastoral and agropastoral communities. Somalia’s traditional livestock sector is based on nomadic pastoralism with a growing private sector-led export industry.

3. **Crop Failure**
   - While the ongoing Deyr (October-December 2022) rains marginally replenished pasture and water resources and enabled crop cultivation in some areas, water and pasture scarcity persists, and crops for the January 2023 harvest are grim.

4. **High Food Prices**
   - Shortfalls in food production lead to substantial increases in imports to meet local needs, resulting in increased prices and pressure on household food access. Domestic maize and sorghum prices rise by more than 50 percent in many southern regions during drier-than-normal periods.

5. **Water Crisis**
   - In pastoral and agropastoral areas, water shortages and high prices complicate life. Pastoralists are forced to migrate to distant grazing areas. Agropastoral and riverine livelihood zones have had several consecutive failed cereal harvests, with further disruption to cash crops and cereal production in riverine areas due to low water levels in the Juba and Shabelle Rivers.

6. **Acute Malnutrition**
   - As food security conditions worsen and water availability and quality decline, acute watery diarrhea (AWD) outbreaks are common in many parts of the country. Coupled with increased measles cases, these contribute to rising levels of acute malnutrition, as reflected in the increasing number of moderately and severely malnourished children admitted to treatment centres in many areas. Another major contributing factor to the current high acute malnutrition levels in Somalia includes low milk availability due to limited livestock holding among the poor, stemming from prolonged drought, water scarcity and livestock deaths.

7. **Drought-induced Conflict**
   - Drought breeds competition over scarce pasture and water resources, leading to clashes among pastoral communities. Drought also causes livestock price shocks that lead to conflicts by reducing participation opportunities.

**The Drought Measurement Scale**

**NORMAL**
Normal conditions with communities having adequate water and pasture

**MILD**
Going into drought, long-term dryness along the planning and growth of crops

**MODERATE**
Crop or pasture losses are likely; water shortages track commonly

**SEVERE**
Crop or pasture losses are likely; water shortages track commonly; livestock migration and death cases

**EXTREME**
Major crop/pasture losses with limited migration options; livestock deaths; widespread water shortages and water trucking.

Source: SWALIM

**SOMALIA Drought Conditions Map | August 2022**

Drought and conflict drive acute food insecurity in Somalia, leading to widespread displacement, deaths, and destruction of livelihoods.
Major Droughts in Somalia | 2010 - 2022

By nature, Somalia has an arid and semi-arid climate, with two major rainfall seasons. However, the rising intensity and frequency of erratic rainfall and severe droughts exacerbate the country’s water scarcity, constraining livelihood activities and fostering drought-induced migration and population displacements. The protracted conflict and insecurity further aggravate the food crisis. Somalia has experienced three major drought crises in the past decade in 2010/11, 2016/17, and 2021/22/23.

The 2010/11 drought crisis led to famine that killed at least 260,000 people: A multi-season drought that started across Somalia in late 2020 is expected to continue worsening through June 2023, leading to further deterioration of the country’s food security and nutrition situation. Persistent conflict and insecurity – particularly in central and southern Somalia – and global supply and price shocks further exacerbate the food insecurity situation in Somalia.

NOTE: Whereas this infographic plots Somalia’s population classified in IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse) on the area graph covering the last 14 years, when comparing, it is essential to consider that the methodology and base population data have changed over time.

**4.3M People in IPC Phase 3+ | 1 July 2011**

Due to prolonged drought, conflict, and high food prices, a Famine was declared in southern Somalia in July 2011. Some 4.3 million people were classified in IPC Phase 3 or above, and an estimated half million children were acutely malnourished.

**3.3M People in IPC Phase 3+ | 1 July 2017**

Somalia was on the brink of Famine in mid-2017. Sequential seasons of reduced rainfall, low harvests, and dying livestock exposed the country to famine from drought, compounding decades of climatic shocks and conflict. Timely and scaled up humanitarian assistance averted worse outcomes.

**8.3M People in IPC Phase 3+ | 1 April - June 2023**

Due to the deepening drought, conflict and high food prices, Famine (IPC Phase 5) is projected among agropastoral populations in Baidoa and Burhakaba districts and displaced populations in Baidoa town of Bay region and in Mogadishu in southern Somalia. Nearly 8.3 million people across Somalia will likely experience high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) between April and June 2023.