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## **Joint News Release – Somalia: Drought, conflict and high food prices risk pushing 4.4 million people into hunger, The Federal Government of Somalia and UN warn**

**MOGADISHU, Somalia, 26 February 2025** – 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 adequate 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 – 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 (IPC3+). 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 Somalia Country Representative 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."

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.

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.

#### MORE INFORMATION

- [SODMA and FAO Call for Immediate Preparedness Measures as Somalia Faces Severe Climate Challenges](#)
- [HUNGER SET TO WORSEN IN SOMALIA AS LA NINA DROUGHT LOOMS](#)

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