

SOMALIA

BACKGROUND

Somalia remains one of the most challenging and worrying humanitarian crises in the world. Sixteen years without an effective central government in the Somali Republic has led to the destruction of the country's infrastructure, disintegration of basic health and social services and widespread human rights abuses.

At the beginning of 2006, the country was experiencing an aggravated humanitarian emergency brought on by the worst drought in over a decade. Approximately 2.1 million people countrywide, or 25 percent of the population, were in need of critical humanitarian assistance including 400 000 IDPs.

The possibility of a famine developing in the first half of the year was averted thanks to humanitarian interventions, the country's clan-based social support system and the absence of countrywide conflict. However, despite a slight improvement in the food security situation, the FAO FSAU-Somalia reported that in 2007 up to 1.8 million people will require urgent assistance. Support from the international community will be decisive in improving livelihoods in the country, which consistently ranks among the world's poorest.

CHALLENGES FACING FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS

Somalia is subject to various natural hazards such as drought and flood, causing crop and livestock losses. The country's agricultural cycle revolves around two rain periods: Gu (April-June) and Deyr (October-December). Poor rainfall impacts the availability of water and pasture in the pastoral areas, which can increase resource-based conflicts in these communities.

For the past four years, Somalia has suffered prolonged droughts and poor rains, the consequences of which are compounded by civil unrest and population movement. In many parts of the country, pastoralists have lost approximately 50 percent of their livestock and destitution is on the rise.

Poor rural households produce 20 to 60 percent of their own food requirements in any given year and the balance is either purchased or obtained through barter. Therefore, individual production and the ability of households to purchase food are key determinants of food security in the country.

Effects of the drought and lack of governance on Somalia's food insecurity have included limited food production, reduction in livestock holdings, low labour opportunities and high incidence of disease.

KEY FACTS

- Population: 8.2 million
- GDP (PPP) per capita: US\$600
- Population below poverty line: n/a
- Labour force by occupation: agriculture 71%, industry and services 29%
- Total land area: 637 657 sq km, bordering the Gulf of Aden, the Indian Ocean, Ethiopia and Djibouti
- Total arable land: 2%
- Life expectancy: male: 46 years, female: 50 years
- Literacy rate: male: 49.7% , female: 25.8%
- Human Development Index: Unranked

(Source: UN; World Bank)

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FAO IN SOMALIA

FAO's focus in Somalia is on restoring the livelihoods of the most vulnerable communities. Programmes include emergency assistance to drought-, flood- and conflict-affected farmers and herders, the provision and analysis of food security and nutrition information, and water and land information management.

The 2006 Gu season delivered a good harvest that improved the overall food security situation in Somalia. Water is more readily available, farmers have harvested crops and pasture has begun to regenerate in most pastoral areas. The sorghum harvest has been relatively good, hence Bay region, where most of the sorghum is produced, has recovered particularly well from last year's crop failure. Maize production however was poor, and regions such as Middle and Lower Juba remain of high concern, as do pastoral regions such as Gedo, Hiraan and Bakool.

FAO RESPONSE

In 2007, the consolidated appeal for Somalia is structured along two pillars: humanitarian relief and early recovery. The first and largest pillar will focus only on humanitarian relief. The early recovery pillar will allow donors to fund priority early recovery activities, which work to restore services, livelihood opportunities and governance in order to stabilize human security by addressing underlying risks that trigger 'shocks' such as conflict, drought and floods.

FAO contributes to both pillars. Relief interventions in the food security, livelihood and nutrition sectors are concentrated in the south and central regions. FAO's proposals aim to protect and improve household food security by increasing access to food and means of production and by strengthening local institutions and community capacity to cope with future shocks. Focus is also on strengthening emergency coordination and mainstreaming gender in emergency programming. FAO's contribution to the early recovery pillar is substantiated by joint interventions with other UN agencies aimed at promoting employment and livelihood support throughout Somalia leading to improved community and productive assets, job creation, reduced vulnerability and food insecurity.

Through the FSAU, FAO continues to provide evidence-based analysis of food, nutrition and livelihood security to enable both short-term emergency responses and long-term strategic planning. The use of tools such as the IPC allows partners and donors to ensure that resource allocation for food security and livelihood support is proportional to requirements.

PROPOSALS: FAO EMERGENCY AND REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE

Funding required US\$8 275 000

Strengthen community capacity to cope with future shocks

Objectives: Increase livelihoods resilience and preserve productive assets.

Activities: Strengthen public infrastructure, particularly water-points to facilitate movement of stock to enable drought-time grazing; support fodder production initiatives along rivers in order to develop economic partnership between farmers and pastoralists (including fodder crop seed production); support animal health initiatives aimed at increasing Somali livestock professional and Community Based Animal Health Workers capacity (particularly in Bakool and Hiraan Regions); rehabilitate river embankments.

Beneficiaries: 20 000 households.

Implementing partners: ASEP, SADO, AFREC, ACF, COOPI, VSF-S.

Duration: January – December 2007.

Funds requested: US\$3 715 000.

Provide emergency livelihood services to directly increase food access and means of production

Objectives: Protect and improve household food security (including asset-based security).

Activities: Emergency local purchase and distribution of agricultural inputs for drought tolerant crops (primarily seeds) to 60 000 farmers in rainfed areas with significant and consecutive crop failure; animal re-distribution to marginalized pastoralists, mainly healthy shoats and pack animals; support targeted de-stocking of so called 'non-productive' animals as a voluntary option for pastoralists affected by drought and other livestock interventions as necessary.

Beneficiaries: 100 000 farmers across Gedo, Lower and Middle Juba, Baakol and Hiraan and Galgadud Regions.

Implementing partners: ASEP, SADO, AFREC, ACE, COOPI, VSF-S.

Duration: January – December 2007.

Funds requested: US\$3 660 000.

Strengthen emergency coordination mechanisms and community capacities

Objectives: Maximize access and response to vulnerable groups.

Activities: Monthly coordination meetings for emergency interventions in order to support humanitarian information sharing systems and establish consensus on response options; train and support 'credible' Somali partners through PCM approaches; and sensitize and train partners on constraints and solutions for gender mainstreaming in emergency programming.

Beneficiaries: All stakeholders involved in agriculture and livelihoods.

Implementing partners: Oxfam GB, Save the Children UK.

Duration: January – December 2007.

Funds requested: US\$460 000.

Nutritional surveillance through the Food Security Analysis Unit (FSAU)

Objectives: Provide timely and appropriate information on nutritional status of populations in food insecure areas of Somalia.

Activities: Nutrition surveillance through the timely collection of up to date nutrition, health and food security data throughout Somalia; research into the factors contributing to malnutrition in Somalia; training and technical support to partners implementing projects and/or conduct nutrition assessments based on the recommended international protocols or guidelines and information sharing with partners through the production and dissemination of monthly nutrition updates.

Beneficiaries: All stakeholders in the Somalia Programme (i.e. local authorities, donors, UN agencies, international NGOs, national NGOs and the people of Somalia).

Implementing partners: Government, WFP, UNICEF, OCHA, international NGOs, local NGOs and local communities in Somalia.

Duration: January – December 2007.

Funds requested: US\$440 000.