

Somalia

Background

The humanitarian crisis in Somalia continues to escalate at an alarming rate, as confirmed by the Food Security Analysis Unit's survey completed in August 2008. Increasing civil insecurity has intensified human suffering in terms of killings, violence, human rights abuses and population displacement. The number of Somalis currently in need of humanitarian assistance exceeds 3.2 million, representing approximately 43 percent of the population and a 77 percent increase since January 2008.

The country's dependence on imported commodities, combined with the high devaluation of the Somali Shilling and increasing food and fuel prices, have created an economic crisis with widening effects on the broader population, with particularly strong impacts in urban areas. The country also continues to suffer from recurrent drought and floods. Several regions throughout Somalia have been affected by below-average rainfall for four consecutive seasons. Further humanitarian interventions are needed to sustain existing natural resource-based livelihoods, as well as to assist families to regain productive assets and return progressively to sustainable livelihoods.

KEY FACTS

- Population: 7.5 million
- GNI per capita (USD): 130
- Population below poverty line: 43.2%
- Life expectancy: 47 years
- Total arable land: 1.64%
- Population in agriculture: 71%
- Population undernourished: 36%
- Total land area: 637 327 sq km
- Human Development Index: no data

(Source: UN; World Bank; World Factbook)

Challenges facing food security and livelihoods

In 2008, humanitarian workers have been confronted with increasing threats to their security and safety, particularly in central and southern Somalia, as well as in Puntland. Between January and September, 129 security incidents were reported involving humanitarian workers and assets, which were often direct targets of the aggression. Furthermore, piracy has affected critical supply routes to central and southern Somalia. The naval escorts recently provided by the Governments of France, Denmark, the Netherlands and Canada have facilitated secure passage for humanitarian aid.

Approximately 80 percent of the Somali population depends on agricultural or pastoral livelihoods. Rural households are unable to produce food to cover their requirements and rely heavily on commercial or food-aid imports. Decreasing household production and purchasing power have deepened the prolonged crisis. Rates of malnutrition in most of southern and central Somalia have surpassed emergency thresholds of 15 percent, exceeding 20 percent in some areas.

S O M A L I A

The major grain production regions of Middle and Lower Shabeelle produced approximately half of the long-term cereal production average owing to drought during the recent Gu (April–June) season. Production shortfalls in Middle and Lower Shabeelle consequently affect other regions which normally depend on this area’s cereal surplus. In the north, where malnutrition rates are normally low and stable, there is an emerging crisis as pastoralists struggle to cope with decreased rainfall, deteriorated water and pasture conditions and increases in commodity costs. Immediate efforts are needed to reduce crop failure and restore production capacity in response to urgent humanitarian needs.

FAO response

The Agriculture and Livelihoods Cluster recognizes and stresses the need for humanitarian interventions which facilitate long-term recovery. The strategy aims to prevent further deterioration of livelihoods by assisting vulnerable families in resuming agricultural and pastoral activities, regaining productive assets and returning progressively to sustainable livelihoods. Overall, the Cluster is determined to reach at least 50 percent of the 3.2 million people in need of assistance, with a particular emphasis on marginalized populations, women and female-headed households.

In 2009, FAO aims to mitigate the negative effects of soaring food prices through the provision of assistance to increase crop, livestock and fisheries production. Interventions also aim to improve techniques for harvesting and processing of local produce. Project activities will also include the improvement of storage systems and the rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure. Pastoral communities will benefit from an integrated approach that combines protection of livestock assets, improvement of animal health and enhancement of capacities to cope with shocks. Assistance to fishing communities will include the provision of assets and small-scale infrastructure, as well as training in improved processing techniques.

“The number of Somalis in need of humanitarian assistance exceeds 3.2 million”

PROPOSALS: FAO EMERGENCY AND REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE

Total funding required: USD 20 869 580

Integrated livelihoods programme	
Objectives:	To restore, protect and improve household food security through the provision of livelihood-enabling assets and training to vulnerable households.
Activities:	Select beneficiaries; provide agricultural inputs, livestock assets, fisheries inputs and small business assets; harvest, process, market and distribute products in an environmentally responsible and sustainable manner; train selected households in dietary diversification; and provide nutritional education.
Beneficiaries:	18 000 households, of which 3 600 are female-headed, 7 850 are IDPs and 150 are HIV-affected.
Implementing partners:	National and international NGOs with a presence in the area of implementation, line ministries and emergency coordination structures.
Duration:	January – December 2009.
Funds requested:	USD 5 817 240.

Strengthening agriculture-based livelihoods and food security of the most vulnerable farming households	
Objectives:	To strengthen and enhance sustainable rural livelihoods by increasing agricultural production and decreasing post-harvest losses in north, central and south Somalia.
Activities:	Distribute packages of seeds, fertilizers and farm implements; train farmers on improved agronomic practices, diet diversification and post-harvest techniques; train artisans on installation and use of metal silos and facilitate their local construction; and provide equipment for threshing/shelling and drying under hygienic conditions.
Beneficiaries:	35 000 vulnerable farmers.
Implementing partners:	International and national NGOs.
Duration:	January – December 2009.
Funds requested:	USD 4 032 600.

Strengthening the livelihoods of pastoral communities

Objectives:	To improve the health status of livestock assets of vulnerable pastoral households by improving access to water and protecting animals against diseases, thus improving food security and the capacity to cope with future shocks.
Activities:	Improve public water infrastructure through cash-for-work schemes; support fodder production; increase operational capacity for livestock professionals and community-based animal health workers; conduct vaccinations, surveillance, sero-monitoring and awareness raising on diseases; enhance laboratory capacity; purchase small ruminants for distribution of meat to selected households; equip women to process sun-dried meat; and provide nutritional education.
Beneficiaries:	40 000 households.
Implementing partners:	International and national NGOs and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (regional offices).
Duration:	January – December 2009.
Funds requested:	USD 4 841 980.

Support to fishing communities to enhance fishing livelihoods and resilience to cope with current and future shocks

Objectives:	To support livelihoods' establishment and improve the nutritional and financial situation for poor households through the sustainable harvesting, processing, marketing and distribution of marine products for domestic consumption.
Activities:	Distribute fishing units with gear and basic safety and communication equipment; provide equipment for handling and processing of fish; raise awareness on safety at sea; construct a small-scale handling and processing centre; organize fisherfolk and fish trader associations; and educate beneficiaries on the nutritional value of fish.
Beneficiaries:	750 fishing households for sustainable fishing livelihoods and 200 female-headed households for fish marketing and fish waste processing livelihoods.
Implementing partners:	International and national NGOs and the Ministry of Fisheries (regional offices).
Duration:	January – December 2009.
Funds requested:	USD 2 345 200.

Strengthen emergency coordination mechanisms and effective rapid response

Objectives:	To maximize access and response to vulnerable groups in need of assistance.
Activities:	Identify beneficiary communities and households; train and support Somali partners; sensitize partners on constraints and solutions for HIV/AIDS and gender mainstreaming in emergency planning; and conduct monthly coordination meetings.
Beneficiaries:	All beneficiaries of interventions and stakeholders in the IASC Agriculture and Livelihoods Cluster.
Implementing partners:	International and national NGOs, line ministries and emergency coordination structures in Somaliland, Puntland and south-central Somalia.
Duration:	January – December 2009.
Funds requested:	USD 1 132 560.

Somalia Food Security Analysis Unit (FSNAU) 2009

Objectives:	To ensure that the FSNAU continues to deliver timely and relevant food security, livelihood and nutrition information and analysis on emergency situations to inform emergency response activities during a 12-month project phase.
Activities:	Conduct monthly briefings to partners; collect data on nutrition, health and food security to monitor livelihoods; conduct two cycles of representative nutrition surveys in crisis-prone areas; conduct two inter-agency Seasonal Field Assessments and Analysis Workshops; produce and disseminate monthly food security and nutrition publications; conduct rapid emergency assessments as needed; and continue processing, analysis and management of data.
Beneficiaries:	Populations identified from FSNAU's assessments and all stakeholders in Somalia that use FSNAU's information.
Implementing partners:	No direct implementing partners, but international and national NGOs, local authorities and line ministries will participate in assessments and surveys.
Duration:	January – December 2009.
Funds requested:	USD 2 700 000.

