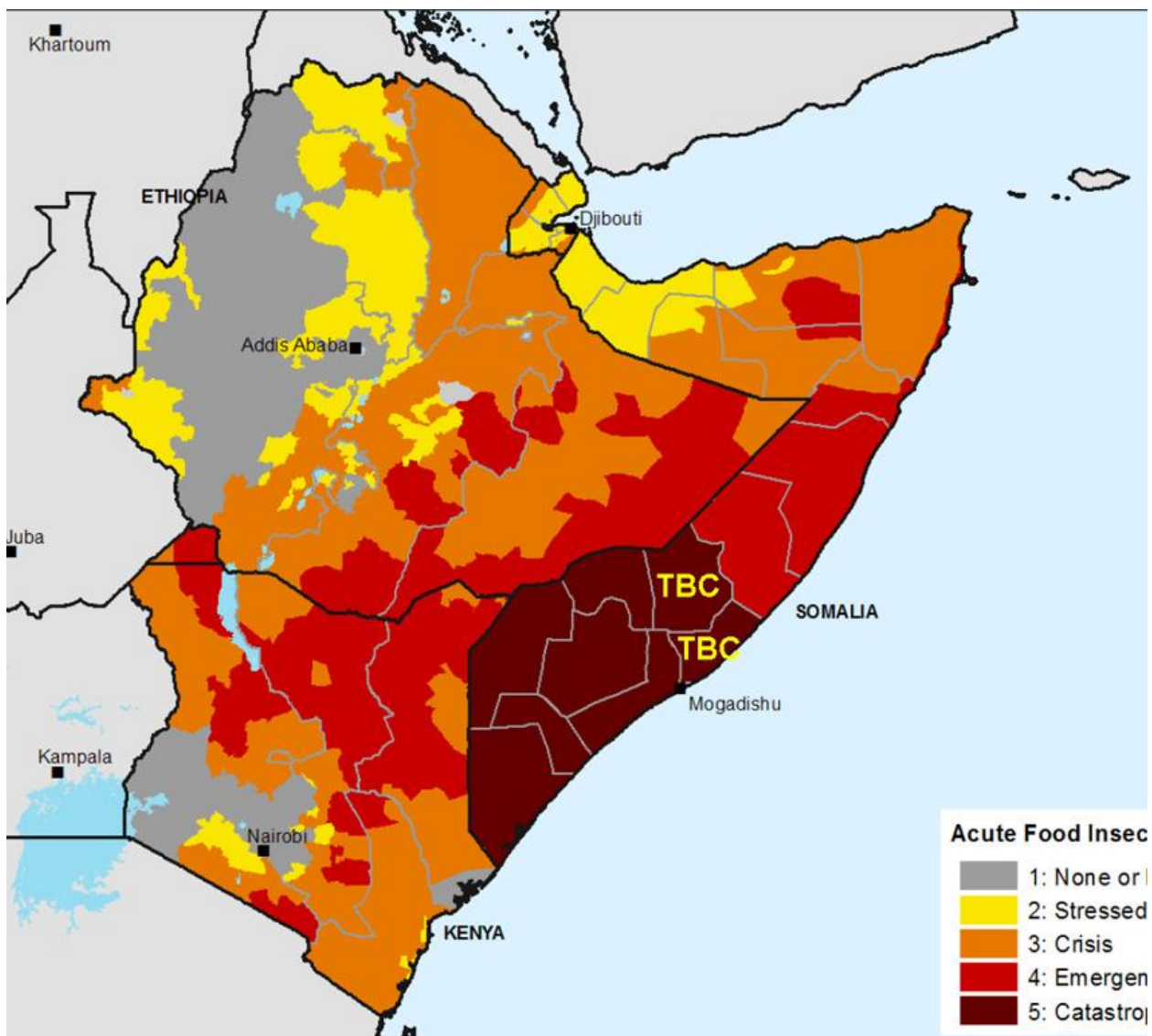


ACT ALLIANCE AFRICA REGION - STATEMENT ON HORN OF AFRICA DROUGHT

Background Information

The Horn of Africa is in the midst of a major drought resulting from La Niña and Indian Ocean Dipole reducing "moisture influx due to the cooling of the ocean water along the East Africa Coast". What makes the current drought alarming in the Greater Horn of Africa region is that, it follows two consecutive poor rainfall seasons in 2016 and the likelihood of depressed rainfall persisting into the March-May rainfall season this year. The seriously affected areas include most of Somalia, South Eastern Ethiopia, South Sudan, Northern Eastern and Coastal Kenya, and Northern Uganda.



In a press briefing, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development's (IGAD) Executive Secretary Mahboub Maalim said the current drought is far much worse than that of 2010-2011, resulting in depleted water points, reduced crops, increased food insecurity and adversely affecting the livelihoods of vulnerable communities in the region. The current depressed rainfall and reluctant poor vegetation conditions since March 2016 have eroded the coping and adaptive capacities of affected people.

Climate predictions and early warnings produced by IGAD through advanced scientific modelling and prediction tools, have elicited early actions, preparedness and mitigation measures. Member States have initiated early actions to mitigate the impact. Somalia, South Sudan and Kenya have declared drought national emergencies/disasters. Kenya announced a doubling of expenditure on food relief to ease the pressure in the drought-affected counties, while Uganda shifted some of its development resources to finance emergency response in order to address food insecurity and livelihood protection.

The 45th Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum (GHACOF 45), which ended on Wednesday (February 8) in Addis Ababa, presented a consensus climate outlook for the period March-May, and its likely impact on disaster risk management, livestock production, water, energy and health. A multi-humanitarian coordination mechanism led by IGAD is effectively working to coordinate response efforts. IGAD is also working with relevant national authorities, UN agencies and CSOs in each member state on the development of an integrated regional appeal. IGAD is also convening a regional ministerial meeting at the end of March to launch the appeal and secure financial resources to complement the response.

ACT Alliance Response to Horn of Africa Drought- Country Specific Response

The ACT Alliance regional office-Africa has been monitoring the drought situation and is working closely with members through ACT forums in Ethiopia, South Sudan, Somalia and Kenya on planned interventions. The members in the said countries have planned responses through the ACT humanitarian mechanism and have developed appeals so far for Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia while the appeal for South Sudan is in the final stages of submission.

Below is a summary of the planned response by countries as it stands on March 15th, 2017 followed by the country-specific ACT planned response profile details.

Country	Total Affected Population	Targeted population by ACT Members	Major sectors of Response	Appeal budget (Requested) USD
Ethiopia	5.6 million	299,500	WASH, Livestock, Livelihoods, Nutrition, Food security (Cash for work)	5.02 million
Kenya	3.0 million	334,000	WASH, Food security(Cash/voucher distribution), Protection	4.0 million
Somalia	6.2 million	150,500	WASH, Livestock, Livelihoods, Nutrition, Food Security (Cash for work)	5.1 million
South Sudan	4.9 million	282,200	WASH, Nutrition, Food security, NFI, Protection & Psychosocial support	9.2 million

Ethiopia

After the El Niño weather phenomenon that severely affected Ethiopia and left 10.2 million people in need of emergency assistance in 2015/16, Ethiopia is once again subject to severe weather conditions causing the failure of the Hageya/Deyr rains (fall rain) in the southern and eastern rainfall belt. The severe water shortages resulting from negative Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) induced drought have caused high numbers of livestock deaths due to lack of pasture and high rate of disease. The Ethiopian Government with its humanitarian partners have issued the Humanitarian Requirement Document (HRD) in mid-January 2017 and declared that a total 5.6 million people are in need of urgent assistance. A total of USD 948 million has been requested. On its part, the Ethiopian Government has made an initial pledge of 47.35m leading the drought response effort in addition to the 730 million USD allocated to the El Niño drought response last year. A joint release by the National Disaster Risk Management Commission (DRMC) and the UN Humanitarian Coordinator on March 10, 2017 confirmed that the poor spring rains performance may significantly increase the needy population beyond the targeted 5.6 million.

Proposed interventions/ sector response activities

- Provision of drinking water for people and livestock
- Provision of water treatment chemicals
- Rehabilitation of water supply infrastructure
- Non Food Items support,
- Hygiene and Sanitation
- Animal feed, veterinary services and livestock destocking
- Health and Nutrition, and protection.

Total Preliminary Budget –US\$ 5,023,922

More details on ACT Ethiopia Forum Preliminary Appeal can be accessed via the link below:

<http://actalliance.org/appeals-rapid-response-funds/drought-emergency-response-in-ethiopia/>

Kenya

Kenya's President, Uhuru Kenyatta, declared on 9th February 2017, the on-going drought in Kenya as being a national disaster. The drought is affecting 23 out of 47 counties and reported to be at alarming stage. The current drought situation is predicted to last until July 2017. It comes with an urgent plea from government and community leaders for local and international assistance to respond to immediate emergency needs, followed by an early recovery phase of rebuilding pastoral and farmer's lost livelihoods. Causes of drought are attributed to a late start of short rains between the months of October and November 2016. These rains were also very brief and inadequate. As a result, there has been a persistent and widespread deficit of water and food for humans and scarce water and pasture for livestock resulting in livestock mortality rates of 5%.

In addition, poor 2016 short rains affected proper growth of marginal crop producing regions which have predicted crop failure of up to 70 % (compared to a 5 years average already resulting in an increase of food prices). Population numbers of people affected by drought stress are increasing and currently stand at 2.7 million (February 2017). Most affected populations are pastoral communities residing in Arid and Semi-Arid counties of Northern Kenya and marginal farming communities especially those whose livelihood income is based solely on agriculture.

Proposed Intervention/Sector Response activities

- WASH- water trucking, cash for work on water pans
- Protection- conflict resolution
- Early recovery – restoration of livelihoods through provision of farm inputs and DRR
- Food Assistance- Cash vouchers

Total Preliminary Appeal Budget is US\$ 2,391,922. The final appeal budget will rise to about 4.0 million due to additional implementing members being involved in the final appeal.

More details on ACT Kenya Forum members' response can be found in the link below:

<http://actalliance.org/appeals-rapid-response-funds/drought-response-in-kenya/>

Somalia

Somalia is in the grip of an intense drought, induced by up to four consecutive seasons of poor rainfall. In the worst affected areas, poor rainfall and lack of water has wiped out crops and killed livestock, while communities are being forced to sell their assets, and borrow food and money to survive. Since mid-2015, drought conditions have been expanding with impact worsening over time. The drought situation is compounded by protracted conflict which is causing displacements, seasonal climatic shocks as a result of most extreme El Niño phenomenon in 50 years, and disease outbreaks. The UN reported as of 7th March 2017 that 110 people have lost their lives due to the severity of the drought in Somalia.

The latest food security and nutrition analysis from the FAO-managed Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) and the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) issued on 2 February 2017, reveals that the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance has increased from 5 million in September 2016 to 6.2 million from February 2017 and extending to June 2017. This is more than half the population. The situation for children is especially grave. Some 363,000 acutely malnourished children are in need of critical nutrition support, including life-saving treatment for more than 71,000 severely malnourished children. Some 1.9 million people may die of preventable diseases due to lack of access to primary health care services. The maternal mortality ratio for Somalia is among the highest in the world at 732 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births.

Proposed Intervention/Sector Response activities

- Food Assistance
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene facilities and services

catastrophe are observed in Unity and Northern Bahr el Ghazal (61%) and people currently facing famine or risk of famine are in Leer, Mayendit, Koch and Panyijiar in former Unity state.

Conflict and insecurity are the main drivers of this acute food insecurity compounded by the coming lean season and resulting in devastating effects on livelihoods and the nutrition situation. Acute malnutrition is also a major public health emergency in the country. Evidence shows that, in the Southern part of Unity, one in three children are acutely malnourished. This unprecedented situation is exceedingly spilling over to the former ten (10) states of South Sudan that may result into deaths, and massive displacement of people.

Proposed Interventions/ Sectors of response

- Food Security, Nutrition,
- WASH, NFIs,
- Emergency Health,
- Protection & Psychosocial Support,
- Livelihood recovery

ACT South Sudan forum members are developing a full appeal to be published before end of March. Below is the link to the alert:

<http://actalliance.org/alerts/famine-crisis-response-in-south-sudan/>

Call for international solidarity, advocacy and action

“People are dying, this must stop. The international community must act now.” UN Secretary General António Guterres¹

“If you’re relying on rain-fed agriculture, then having the right weather, predictable weather, is crucially important. Those most at risk of malnutrition include the elderly, young children and mothers who are breastfeeding.” - Macharia Kamau, Kenya’s Permanent Representative to the UN and Special Envoy of the President of the UN General Assembly on Climate Change².

The current drought is the region’s severest in decades, putting millions people at risk of starvation. The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) has stated that the current droughts are as a result of climate change and stated that in fact, climate change is making frequent droughts almost inevitable. In Kenya for example, there was a serious drought around once every ten years before 1970. By the 1980s, this had doubled to once every five years. Today, there are droughts almost every other year in the region³. The impacts of climate change, including changes in the seasons and unpredictable rainfall, leave farmers unsure when to plant their crops in order to catch the rains when they do come.

¹ <http://aa.com.tr/en/africa/act-now-to-stop-famine-in-east-africa-un-chief/766879>

² <http://reliefweb.int/report/kenya/climate-change-making-kenya-s-droughts-more-severe>

³ <http://web.unep.org/stories/story/stark-pictures-show-ravaged-land-and-desperate-people-somalia-and-east-africa-face-new-famine>

ACT Alliance joins the voices of governments in the region, the UN and others to call for urgent action to avert further suffering and loss of life in the Horn of African region. In the short term, food and nonfood items, water, and other emergency supplies are required. In the medium and long term, efforts need to be put on supporting the resilience of communities by way of adaptation to droughts. The vulnerability of communities to droughts in the Horn of Africa must be addressed through sustainable solutions already anticipated in the various national, regional and international frameworks.