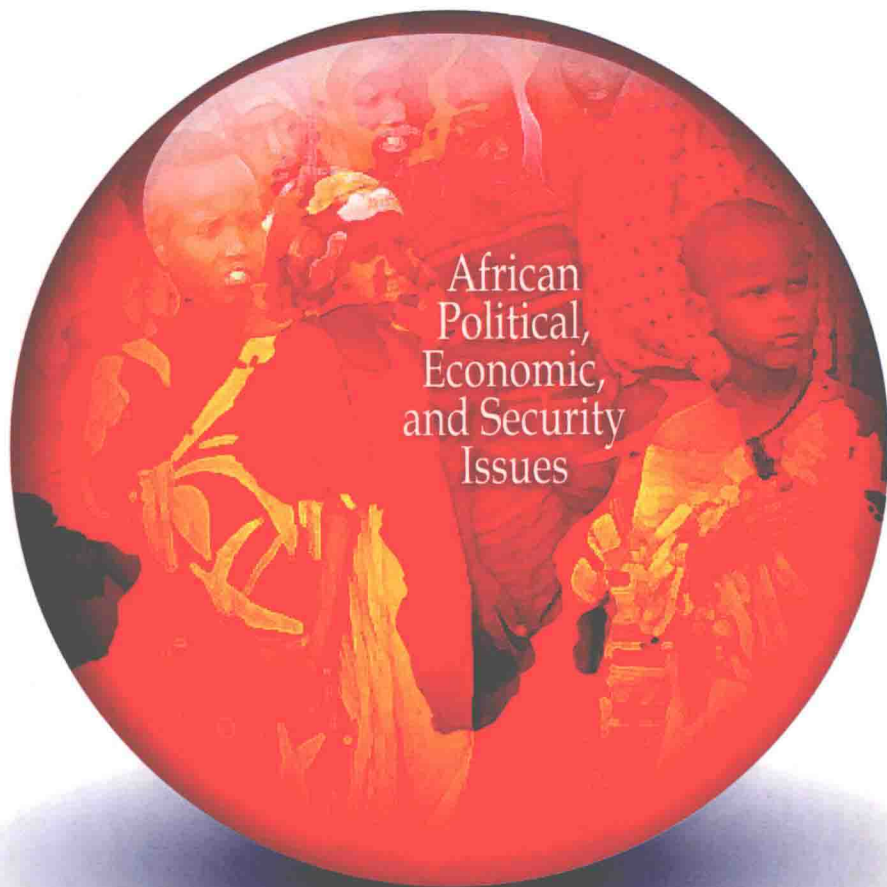


Humanitarian Crisis and Response in the Horn of Africa



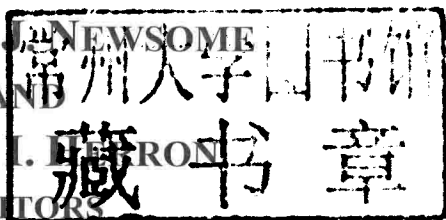
Charley J. Newsome • Hellen I. Herron
Editors

NOVA

AFRICAN POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SECURITY ISSUES

HUMANITARIAN CRISIS AND RESPONSE IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

CHARLEY J. NEWSOME
AND
HELLEN I. DEERON
EDITORS



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FROM A DECLARATION OF PARTICIPANTS JOINTLY ADOPTED BY A COMMITTEE OF THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION AND A COMMITTEE OF PUBLISHERS.

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PREFACE

As a result of the worst drought in 60 years, regional conflicts, and conflict within states, a humanitarian emergency of massive proportion is unfolding in the Horn of Africa region with more than 13.3 million people affected, 750,000 of whom need food assistance in the near future to avoid death. Somalia has been hardest hit so far, creating population displacement within its borders and a refugee crisis of nearly 1 million people in the region, primarily in Kenya and Ethiopia. The international community is responding, and the humanitarian needs are expected to rise and will likely demand sustained attention. This book provides an overview of the current status of the crisis, a summary of the background on the region, a framework for the international and humanitarian response, and an analysis of some of the operational challenges.

Chapter 1 - As a result of the worst drought in 60 years, regional conflicts, and conflict within states, a humanitarian emergency of massive proportion is unfolding in the Horn of Africa region with more than 13.3 million people affected, 750,000 of whom need food assistance in the near term to avoid death. Somalia has been hardest hit so far, creating population displacement within its borders and a refugee crisis of nearly 1 million people in the region, primarily in Kenya and Ethiopia.

The international community is responding, and the humanitarian needs are expected to rise in the coming months and will likely demand sustained attention well into 2012. While life-saving assistance is the current priority, long-term responses may be needed to break the disaster cycle in the Horn. Though triggered by drought, the humanitarian emergency is further complicated by political and security pressures within, between, and among the various countries in the region. This report provides an overview of the current status of the crisis, a summary of the background on the region, a

framework for the international and humanitarian response, and an analysis of some of the operational challenges.

Chapter 2 - Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, and distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today on the humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa. Your attention and concern is critical, as the situation continues to deteriorate daily, with millions of individuals affected.

In scale and severity, the current drought in the Horn of Africa is the worst in 60 years and, according to the UN Office of the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs, it is now affecting an estimated 12.4 million people in Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti. It is both a humanitarian and a security crisis, as famine has been declared in the difficult to access areas of Somalia and refugees are pouring across the borders into already drought-stressed areas of Kenya and Ethiopia.

I will discuss today the current situation, our immediate response, the challenges we face, and our long term plans to address the chronic food insecurity in the Horn of Africa.

Chapter 3 - Good morning, Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, and members of the Committee. Thank you for holding this hearing on the drought and famine in the Horn of Africa. We share your grave concern about the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa. The eastern Horn of Africa is currently experiencing one of the worst droughts since the 1950s. More than 12 million people—mainly in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia—are severely affected and in need of humanitarian assistance. In Somalia, drought conditions have exacerbated a complex emergency that has continued since 1991. The information coming out of the Horn of Africa, especially the dire situation of refugees from Somalia, is devastating. In cooperation with our international and regional partners, we will continue to work to address this humanitarian crisis while continuing to support long-term political and food security in the region.

Chapter 4 - I travelled to Ethiopia and Kenya in July to evaluate the emerging refugee crisis in the region where hundreds of thousands of Somalis have fled drought and famine in Somalia. During my trip, I visited refugee camps in each country along with representatives from donor countries, met with senior government officials, talked with officials from UN agencies and nongovernmental organizations, and spoke with refugees. It was clear that this is developing into the worst humanitarian emergency that the region has seen in a generation, at least since the great famine of 1991-1992. We now must confront a refugee emergency within a protracted refugee situation. Years of

hard work by the host governments and their international partners to address just the basic needs within established camps quickly are being overshadowed by the need to add new border-crossing facilities, new camps, and emergency services.

Chapter 5 - Thank you for inviting me to testify before the Sub-Committee today on the critically important issue of drought and famine in the Horn of Africa. I am here today in my capacity as Director of Policy and Advocacy for Mercy Corps, a global relief and development organization that responds to disasters and supports community development in more than forty countries around the world. Mercy Corps has worked in the Horn for many years, and we currently manage relief and development programs in the three countries most affected by the drought: Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia. In these countries we have hundreds of staff providing assistance to 900,000 drought victims. We are working in many of the areas most affected by the drought: North and Central Somalia, Eastern Ethiopia, and Northeastern Kenya. In these regions we are pursuing a range of drought-focused interventions, including providing access to water; supporting livelihoods so that people can afford to feed themselves and protect their livestock; aiding communities to better manage the scarce water resources that they have; and providing supplemental nutrition to at-risk children and mothers. We are undertaking these programs with the generous support of public and private donors, including the important contributions of the US Agency for International Development.

Chapter 6 - I would like to thank you very much for the opportunity to testify today on the drought and famine conditions in the Horn of Africa in general and in Somalia in particular, as well as on the response of the United States and other members of the international community to this growing crisis.

As we meet, the situation especially critical—the head of the United Nations refugee agency describes it as the “worst humanitarian disaster” in the world today—with nearly half of the Somali population, some 3.7 million people, facing starvation while at least another 11 million men, women, and children across the Horn of Africa are thought to be at risk.

Chapter 7 - Somalia is one of the most inimical countries to humanitarian aid workers. The security context and the humanitarian operational environment that both local and international aid agencies face have severely restricted humanitarian activities, particularly in areas under the control of the radical Islamist group, al Shabaab. Aid organizations responded to al Shabaab's threats by limiting areas of operations or fully suspending operations in southern Somalia. The majority of the organizations that remain

active in Somalia have concentrated operations in and around territory under government control in Mogadishu, territory under the control of government-aligned administrations in central Somalia, and in the semiautonomous regions in northern Somalia of Puntland and Somaliland. In the south, the withdrawal of humanitarian aid organizations has exacerbated the effect of the Horn's severe drought on the Somali people.

Chapter 8 - Mr. Chairman, Congressman Payne, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the humanitarian situation in East Africa and the importance of a coordinated and sustainable US strategy. Oxfam is grateful for the work this committee has done to address the humanitarian situation affecting 12 million people today living in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. We are also grateful for the leadership role the US government has played as the most generous donor, providing \$600 million since the beginning of the year. Oxfam America is an international development and relief agency committed to developing lasting solutions to poverty, hunger and social injustice. We are part of a confederation of 15 Oxfam organizations working together in more than 100 countries with over 3,000 local partners around the globe.

In my testimony today, I will be outlining the humanitarian crisis in the region and providing recommendations for the US government's response based on the situation on the ground.

Chapter 9 - Somalia is located on the east coast of Africa and north of the Equator and, with Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, and Kenya, is often referred to as the Horn of Africa. It comprises Italy's former Trust Territory of Somalia and the former British Protectorate of Somaliland (now seeking recognition as an independent state). The coastline extends 2,720 kilometers (1,700 mi.).

The northern part of the country is hilly, and in many places the altitude ranges between 900 and 2,100 meters (3,000-7,000 ft.) above sea level. The central and southern areas are flat, with an average altitude of less than 180 meters (600 ft.). The Juba and the Shabelle Rivers rise in Ethiopia and flow south across the country toward the Indian Ocean. The Shabelle does not reach the sea.

Chapter 10 - Kenya has a very diverse population that includes three of Africa's major sociolinguistic groups: Bantu (67%), Nilotic (30%), and Cushitic (3%). Kenyans are deeply religious. About 80% of Kenyans are Christian, 11% Muslim, and the remainder follow traditional African religions or other faiths. Most city residents retain links with their rural, extended families and leave the city periodically to help work on the family farm. About 75% of the work force is engaged in agriculture, mainly as subsistence

farmers. The national motto of Kenya is *Harambee*, meaning "pull together." In that spirit, volunteers in hundreds of communities build schools, clinics, and other facilities each year and collect funds to send students abroad.

Chapter 11 - Ethiopia is located in the Horn of Africa and is bordered on the north and northeast by Eritrea, on the east by Djibouti and Somalia, on the south by Kenya, and on the west and southwest by Sudan. The country has a high central plateau that varies from 1,800 to 3,000 meters (6,000 ft.-10,000 ft.) above sea level, with some mountains reaching 4,620 meters (15,158 ft.). Elevation is generally highest just before the point of descent to the Great Rift Valley, which splits the plateau diagonally. A number of rivers cross the plateau--notably the Blue Nile flowing from Lake Tana. The plateau gradually slopes to the lowlands of the Sudan on the west and the Somali-inhabited plains to the southeast.

Chapter 12 - Eritrea is located in the Horn of Africa and is bordered on the northeast and east by the Red Sea, on the west and northwest by Sudan, on the south by Ethiopia, and on the southeast by Djibouti. The country has a high central plateau that varies from 1,800 to 3,000 meters (6,000-10,000 ft.) above sea level. A coastal plain, western lowlands, and some 300 islands comprise the remainder of Eritrea's landmass. Eritrea has no year-round rivers.

The climate is temperate in the mountains and hot in the lowlands. Asmara, the capital, is about 2,300 meters (7,500 ft.) above sea level. Maximum temperature is 26° C (80° F). The weather is usually sunny and dry, with the short or belg rains occurring February-April and the big or meher rains beginning in late June and ending in mid-September.

Chapter 13 - About two-thirds of the Republic of Djibouti's inhabitants live in the capital city. The indigenous population is divided between the majority Somalis (predominantly of the Issa tribe, with minority Issaq and Gadabursi representation) and the Afars (Danakils). All are Cushitic-speaking peoples, and nearly all are Muslim. Among the 15,000 foreigners residing in Djibouti, the French are the most numerous. Among the French are approximately 3,000 troops.

CONTENTS

Preface		vii
Chapter 1	Horn of Africa: The Humanitarian Crisis and International Response <i>Rhoda Margesson, Ted Dagne, Charles E. Hanrahan, Lauren Ploch, Dianne E. Rennack, Marjorie Ann Browne and Susan G. Chesser</i>	1
Chapter 2	Written Testimony of Nancy E. Lindborg, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance, United States Agency for International Development, before the Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on African Affairs, United States Senate, Drought and Famine in the Horn of Africa, August 4, 2011	41
Chapter 3	Testimony, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Don Yamamoto, Bureau of African Affairs, United States Department of State, before the Senate Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on African Affairs, "Responding to Drought and Famine in the Horn of Africa", Wednesday, August, 3, 2011	47

Chapter 4	Written Testimony of Reuben E. Brigety, II, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration, United States Department of State, before the Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on African Affairs, United States Senate, Drought and Famine in the Horn of Africa, August 3, 2011	53
Chapter 5	Statement of Jeremy Konyndyk, Director of Policy and Advocacy, Mercy Corps, United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on Africa, Hearing on: <i>Responding to Drought and Famine in the Horn of Africa</i> , August 3, 2011	59
Chapter 6	Drought & Famine Hearing—Pham Testimony <i>J. Peter Pham</i>	73
Chapter 7	Al Shabaab and the Challenges of Providing Humanitarian Assistance in Somalia <i>Katherine L. Zimmerman</i>	81
Chapter 8	East African Emergencies Hearing— Scribner Testimony <i>Shannon Scribner</i>	89
Chapter 9	Somalia Country Profile <i>United States Department of State</i>	101
Chapter 10	Kenya Country Profile <i>United States Department of State</i>	121
Chapter 11	Ethiopia Country Profile <i>United States Department of State</i>	137
Chapter 12	Eritrea Country Profile <i>United States Department of State</i>	149
Chapter 13	Djibouti Country Profile <i>United States Department of State</i>	161
Chapter Sources		173
Index		175

Chapter 1

HORN OF AFRICA: THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

*Rhoda Margesson, Ted Dagne,
Charles E. Hanrahan, Lauren Ploch,
Dianne E. Rennack, Marjorie Ann Browne
and Susan G. Chesser*

SUMMARY

As a result of the worst drought in 60 years, regional conflicts, and conflict within states, a humanitarian emergency of massive proportion is unfolding in the Horn of Africa region with more than 13.3 million people affected, 750,000 of whom need food assistance in the near term to avoid death. Somalia has been hardest hit so far, creating population displacement within its borders and a refugee crisis of nearly 1 million people in the region, primarily in Kenya and Ethiopia.

The international community is responding, and the humanitarian needs are expected to rise in the coming months and will likely demand sustained attention well into 2012. While life-saving assistance is the current priority, long-term responses may be needed to break the disaster cycle in the Horn. Though triggered by drought, the humanitarian emergency is further complicated by political and security pressures within, between, and among the various countries in the region. This report provides an overview of the current status of the crisis, a summary of the background on the region, a framework for the international and

humanitarian response, and an analysis of some of the operational challenges.

The role of the 112th Congress, which has so far focused on the crisis in hearings, legislation, and congressional correspondence with the Administration, is also examined, particularly with regard to funding questions, including:

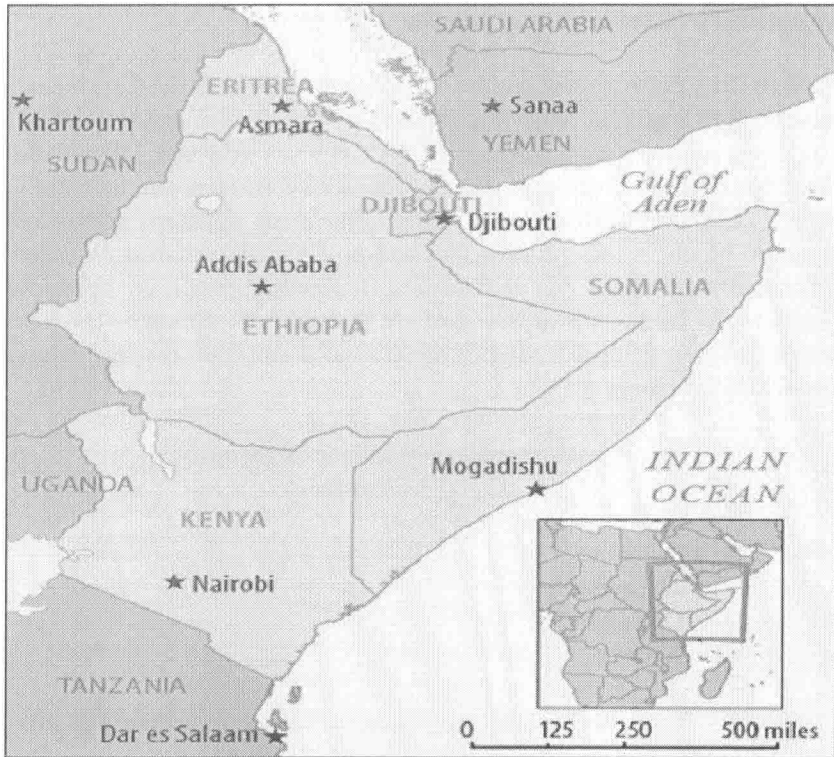
- budget priorities on global humanitarian accounts and food aid;
- diversion of food aid;
- donor restrictions on aid; and
- burdensharing and donor fatigue.

It is anticipated Congress will continue to follow and respond to events as they unfold in the Horn.

INTRODUCTION

The Horn of Africa region, which includes Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia, is facing its worst drought in 60 years. The situation is critical with more than 13.3 million people affected, 4 million in acute need of humanitarian assistance, and 750,000 who are thought to be in dire need of food to prevent death. Conditions in Somalia have created an escalating refugee crisis, primarily in Kenya and Ethiopia. Despite considerable efforts by the United States and the international community to respond to the emergency, the needs of those affected are expected to increase in the coming months and may not stabilize until 2012. Key priorities include food, water and sanitation, health, and protection.

The United States is the largest bilateral donor of humanitarian assistance to the region, having provided over \$600 million in life-saving assistance. It is also working on long-term responses to break the disaster cycle in the Horn. The urgency and scope of the humanitarian emergency, coupled with other contributing factors, such as poor infrastructure, insecurity, and internal unrest, have begun to command the attention of the international community. The 112th Congress has so far focused on the crisis in hearings, legislation, and congressional correspondence with the Administration. It is anticipated Congress will continue to follow and respond to events as they unfold in the Horn.



Source: Congressional Research Service.

Figure 1. Horn of Africa.

CURRENT STATUS OF THE CRISIS

On July 20, 2011, Mark Bowden, the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, issued a famine declaration for two regions of southern Somalia.¹ The United Nations identified three additional areas in southern Somalia in early August and another in early September.² Also on July 20, the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (UNOCHA) elevated the status of the Horn of Africa drought crisis to a major, large-scale emergency, which brought internal resources and focus to bear within UNOCHA, such as surge capacity and additional staff.

Preliminary Numbers at a Glance

UNOCHA estimates the number of people in need of assistance, including refugees, is 13.3 million. Most are considered by the humanitarian community to be extraordinarily vulnerable, and UNOCHA has said that 750,000 are at risk of death from starvation if they do not receive assistance in the next four months. The number of deaths attributed to the crisis to date is unknown but thought to be in the tens of thousands and possibly higher.³ It is expected to increase substantially as the crisis unfolds. Hundreds of people are dying every day due to the famine and at least half are thought to be children. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has estimated one child is dying every six minutes in this crisis.

People Requiring Assistance by Country (Total 13.3 million)

Kenya: 4.3 million
Ethiopia: 4.8 million
Somalia: 4.0 million
Djibouti: 165,642

(NOTE: These figures include refugees, except recent arrivals from Sudan into Ethiopia. Figures for Eritrea are unavailable.)

Number of Displaced Somalis in the Region (Total 2.4 million)

Somali refugees in Kenya: 491,000
Somali refugees in Ethiopia: 182,000
Somali refugees in Djibouti: 18,000
Somali refugees in Yemen: 195,000
Somali Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) (in Somalia): 1.5 million

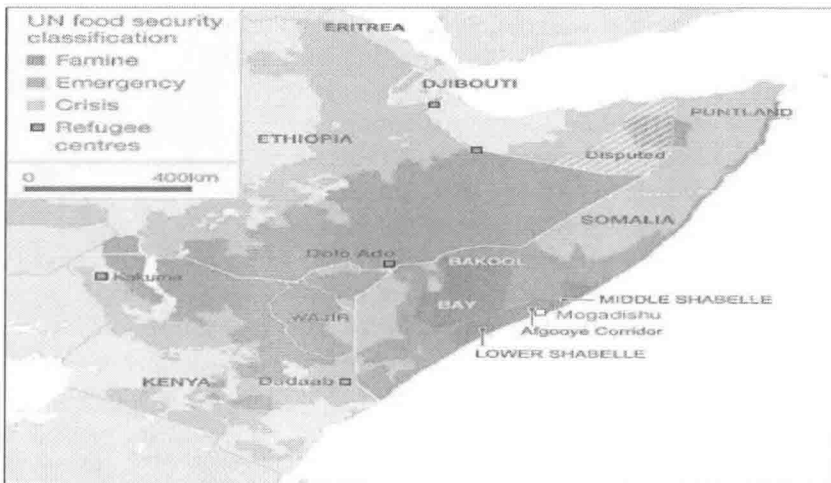
Source: UNOCHA, Horn of Africa Crisis, Situation Report No. 13, September 8, 2011.

Note: Somalis have also sought refuge in smaller numbers in Uganda, Eritrea, and Tanzania.

Food Situation

The drought, compounded by conflict, has led to crop failures, loss of livelihoods (especially among livestock herders), population displacement and famine in southern and central Somalia. The U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Famine Early Warning System (FEWS NET) reports that rains were late and erratic in March through May 2011 and that rainfall totals were less than 30% of average in some areas and 60% below normal precipitation levels in northern Kenya and southern Somalia.

As crops have failed and livestock have died, food prices have soared. Extraordinarily high food and fuel prices have been reported across the region. Staple food prices (from June 2010 to June 2011) have risen by 240% in Somalia, 100% in Ethiopia, and 51% in Kenya. Diesel prices have risen by 45% in Somalia and 30% in Kenya. Critical services such as transport, access to health facilities, food distribution, and water trucking have been affected by the increase in fuel prices. UNOCHA reports that high levels of malnutrition are widespread in northern and eastern Kenya, southern Ethiopia, and central and southern Somalia. (See food shortage map below.) Poor families are unable to purchase food or fuel, contributing to the hundreds of thousands of Somalis who have moved internally or across borders in pursuit of such resources.



Source: BBC, August 2011, edited by CRS.

Figure 2. Food Shortage Map.

The United Nations has stated that the October to December rainfall in the most drought-affected areas of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia is expected to be below average. In addition, a below-average November to January rainfall is expected in southern Somalia. The outlook for the region is that food insecurity will persist into 2012, particularly in southern Somalia, with populations not recovering until the August harvest.⁴

FEWS NET has analyzed projected food assistance needs six months into the future for three of the Horn countries where it has a staff presence: Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia. In Ethiopia, above average food needs are likely to persist, especially in pastoral (livestock herding) areas, although overall needs are expected to decline over the coming six months. In Kenya, three consecutive seasons of poor rainfall in the northeast indicate that food needs will be above average in January, even if forthcoming October-December rains are normal. In Somalia, famine is expected to persist into at least December. August harvests have been estimated at one-third of the 1995-2010 average, and medium-range forecasts have raised concerns about the adequacy of October-December rains. FEWS NET concludes for Somalia that “food assistance needs in February 2012 will remain far above typical levels.”

Displaced Populations

Continuing insecurity and drought have had a disproportionate impact on Somalia, a country already dealing with a protracted humanitarian emergency. An Islamist insurgency led by an Al Qaeda affiliate, Al Shabaab, complicates the delivery of international aid to famine-struck areas, an issue examined in greater detail later in this report. As the effects of the drought have worsened in 2011, populations in southern Somalia have been cut off from most of the international assistance provided to other parts of the Horn of Africa. U.N. agencies warn that famine conditions may spread.⁵ Many people in that part of the country are currently out of reach of most aid agencies, including the World Food Program (WFP). Dire conditions have forced many to flee their homes along what the head of WFP has called “roads of death,” in search of aid at increasingly crowded refugee camps in Kenya and Ethiopia and in IDP camps in and around Mogadishu.⁶

In crises resulting from conflict or natural disasters, population movements often occur within the affected country or flow to countries in close proximity. In these situations the plight of the refugee⁷ is one critical element of population movement; the internally displaced person (IDP) is

another.⁸ Somalia's population is estimated to be approximately 9 million. According to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) roughly 4 million people inside Somalia are impacted by continuing insecurity and drought, of whom 3 million are in the southern regions of Somalia. This figure includes nearly 1.5 million Somali Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

Instability in Somalia has compounded the humanitarian situation throughout the region, as more than 918,000 Somali refugees and asylum seekers strain the limited resources of host communities, with 90% in bordering countries, including over 491,000 in Kenya, 195,000 in Yemen, 182,000 in Ethiopia, and 18,000 in Djibouti.⁹

The number of Somalis displaced by the crisis continues to change. At the end of July, Somali refugees were arriving at camps in Kenya and Ethiopia at a rate of approximately 3,300 per day (1,300 in Kenya and 2,000 in Ethiopia), many in critical condition and with children particularly susceptible to acute malnutrition. By mid-August the numbers dropped drastically in Ethiopia for reasons that are not yet fully known. By mid-September, the number of refugees arriving in Kenya had slowed to an average 1,100 per day while in Ethiopia the number ranged from approximately 350 per day to none. In Yemen, 3,700 Somalis arrived by boat during August, which was the highest reported monthly influx to the country in 2011.¹⁰ (See map below for the location of refugee camps, transit centers, and refugee settlements.)

Kenya and Ethiopia have expressed concern about the economic, security, and demographic implications of refugees crossing their borders in large numbers. They have called for the international community to increase its efforts to deliver aid inside Somalia to avoid a pull factor across the border. The influx of refugees has strained local resources, already scarce, and in some cases caused tensions with host communities. Reports suggest that refugees are vulnerable to sexual violence and have been targeted by criminals en route to the camps and in the areas surrounding them. Kenyan officials have been accused, in some cases, of forcibly returning refugees to Somalia, a practice that would go against a key principle of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, to which Kenya is a State Party.¹¹

Health Concerns among Displaced Populations

Preventing secondary causes of death and illness related to acute malnutrition, including communicable diseases such as measles, cholera, and respiratory infections, and vector-borne diseases such as malaria, is critical. Humanitarian agencies remain very concerned about the health situation in Somalia and in the refugee camps. Communicable diseases spread more easily