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Organization of the  
United Nations

**Somalia**

# Drought Action Plan 2019

An urgent call for humanitarian action in rural Somalia





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# Somalia drought 2019: why act now?

A timely response addressed the 2016/17 drought and averted a famine. We cannot stop there.

<b>Severity</b>	<p><b>Somalia is experiencing a severe drought across most of the country.</b></p> <p>Up to a 50 percent decrease in cereal production is expected, regardless of rains beyond May. If the <i>Gu</i> rains continue poorly, cereal losses could exceed 50 percent and livestock could start dying in large numbers.</p>
<b>Duration</b>	<p><b>Six out of seven rainy seasons have been poor in Somalia since 2016.</b></p> <p>The one “good” rainy season (<i>Gu</i> 2018) brought severe flooding and cyclone damage to southern and northern Somalia. People have had no time or means to recover.</p>
<b>Need</b>	<p><b>An estimated 5.4 million Somalis face acute food insecurity through September 2019.</b></p> <p>This includes 2.2 million people in Crisis (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification [IPC] Phase 3) and Emergency (IPC Phase 4): a 40 percent increase since the beginning of 2019.</p>
<b>Coverage</b>	<p><b>Somalia’s 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan is only 19 percent funded (as of May),</b> while not accounting for the drought and large increase in the number of people in need. This is forcing humanitarian partners to scale back, rather than scale up in the face of growing needs.</p> <p>For example, the number of people receiving food security assistance has declined by 50 percent compared to 2018.</p>
<b>Risk</b>	<p><b>If we fail to provide for people’s most basic needs, there will be massive setbacks and repercussions.</b></p> <p>This could include a renewed risk of widespread hunger and malnutrition, new large waves of displacement, heightened insecurity and protection concerns.</p>
<b>Opportunity</b>	<p><b>Systems and responses that proved effective in 2017 can be quickly reactivated or scaled up.</b></p> <p>There is scope to halt and reverse these worsening trends in Somalia – if we act together now.</p>

# Introduction

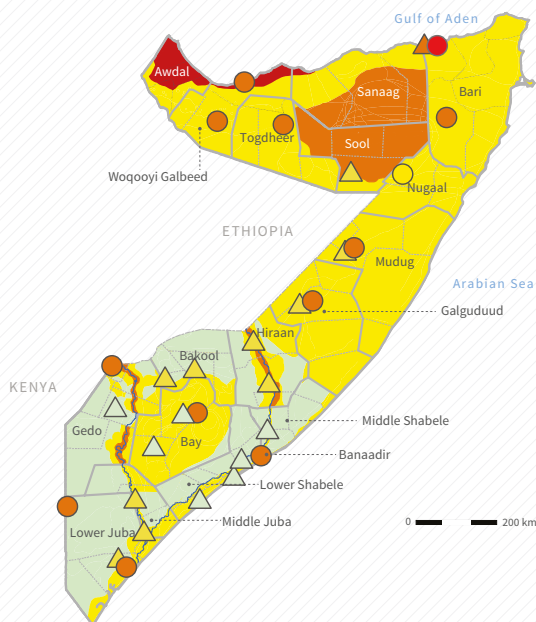
The number of rural people projected to be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) has increased more than seven-fold since the start of 2019.

Somalia again faces severe drought conditions, with only one season of good rains separating the current and 2016/17 drought. Six out of seven rainy seasons have been poor since 2016, including the ongoing *Gu* rains (April–June), which started late and have underperformed since early May. Based on rainfall so far, the upcoming *Gu* harvest will likely be half of a normal year at best. This is especially grim as even in a normal year Somalia produces only around one-third of its cereal requirements. Livestock are in extremely poor condition and risk dying in large numbers if the rains continue to be poor.

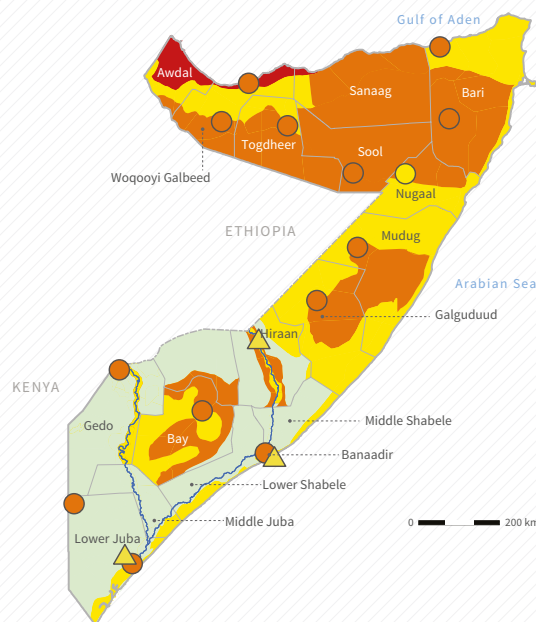
Despite a large-scale, sustained response that contributed to preventing a famine in 2017 and further deterioration in 2018, people in Somalia have had no time to recover. They have continued to face a severe humanitarian crisis despite the temporary break in drought during *Gu* 2018, which brought heavy flooding and cyclone damage. Although the rains did provide some much-needed relief, 4.6 million Somalis continued to face hunger in the second half of 2018. This included 1.5 million people in Crisis and Emergency (IPC Phases 3 and 4) – 50 percent higher than pre-crisis levels. With the return of drought, humanitarian needs are again rising sharply among a population that is far more vulnerable today than in 2016.

## Deteriorating food security projections since mid-2018

August–December 2018



February–June 2019



### IPC acute food insecurity phase classification

- Minimal
- Stressed
- Crisis
- Emergency
- Famine
- Areas with inadequate evidence
- Not analysed
- IDP settlement, colour depicts phase
- Urban settlement, colour depicts phase

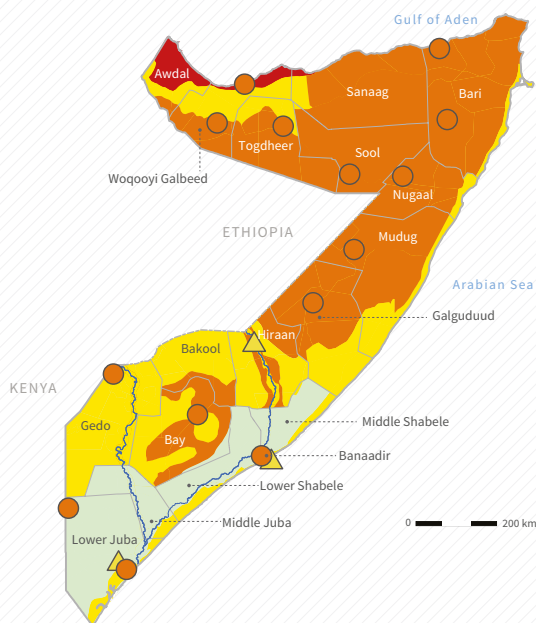
Source: FSNAU – FEWS NET



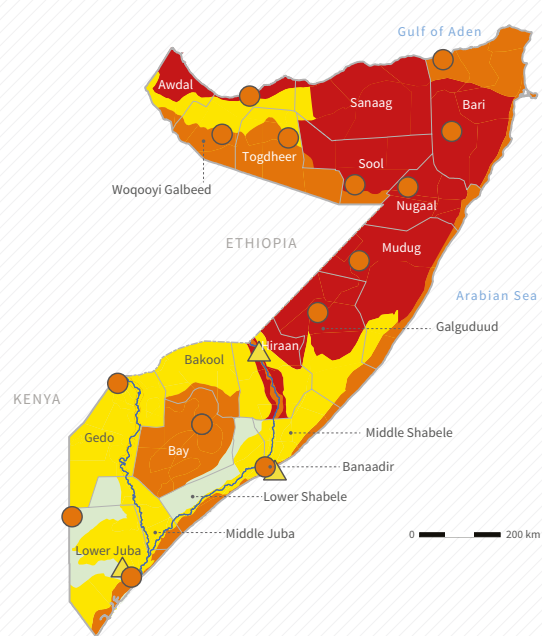
Latest projections warn that 5.4 million Somalis will be in Stressed, Crisis or Emergency levels of food insecurity (IPC Phases 2, 3 and 4) from July to September 2019. This includes more than a 40 percent increase in the number of people in Crisis and Emergency, from 1.5 to 2.2 million, comprising rural (48 percent), internally displaced (40 percent) and urban (12 percent) people. Nutrition levels are also deteriorating. Early warning data show abnormal increases in monthly admissions of acutely malnourished children, alongside major health concerns including measles outbreaks. Already, 2.6 million Somalis are internally displaced – a number that will increase sharply if humanitarian assistance does not reach rural areas in time and at a sufficient scale. This includes time-bound actions to save lives and livelihoods, protect food production and prevent destitution and further population displacement.

Early warnings already show more than a seven-fold increase in the rural population in Emergency (IPC Phase 4), from 40 000 to nearly 300 000 people comparing February–June and July–September 2019 projections. During this timeframe, rural people make up two-thirds of the population in Emergency (IPC Phase 4), which precedes Famine on the IPC scale. As seen during the 2017 famine alert and 2011 Famine, these

April–June 2019



July–September 2019



more than 40% increase in IPC Phases 3 and 4








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numbers can rise further very quickly if rural livelihoods continue to erode. The upcoming July–September dry season (*Hagaa*) will be an especially difficult period for rural communities. July should be a time when food is abundant as the new harvest comes in and pasture and water sources are replenished following *Gu* rains. This year however, farmers in the south will harvest little if anything in July, a situation made worse due to a poor harvest at the end of last year. Agricultural employment is also limited this season due to the weak *Gu* rains and low river levels that adversely affected agricultural activities in agropastoral and riverine areas. Income from labour and the harvest in July will be insufficient to replenish farmers’ food stocks or generate income, and ultimately extend their lean season by another six months.

Pastoralists are in an especially vulnerable position, particularly in central and northern Somalia. They have lost a significant portion of their livestock due to the severe drought of 2016/17. As a result, herd sizes are currently far below baseline levels, leaving poor pastoralists with few saleable animals. In the worst affected areas, livestock are already in poor body condition from lack of water, scarce pasture and drought-related illnesses. Most animals belonging to vulnerable households are too weak to produce milk, to be sold or traded for other food items. Pastoralists rely entirely on this production and trade to eat and cover other needs. Poor households are already culling weaker livestock to save the rest, while sharing their own scarce supply of water and grains with their animals for them to survive.

Table 1. Original HRP requirements, revised target and funding gap

Priority	Original HRP requirements		Revised target		Funded	Gap	
	People	USD million	People	USD million	USD million	USD million	%
 <b>Priority 1.</b> Increase food access and protect livelihoods	418 200	67.2	801 600	107.9	24.1	83.8	78
 <b>Priority 2.</b> Protect livestock assets	2 187 000	12.8	5 544 000	22.6	3.6	19.0	84
 <b>Priority 3.</b> Mitigate new shocks	-	13.4	-	13.2	0.7	12.5	94
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 605 200</b>	<b>93.4</b>	<b>6 345 600</b>	<b>143.7</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>115.3</b>	<b>80</b>

This Plan outlines urgent action to halt and reverse these worsening trends in rural areas and prevent displacement. It revisits the 2019 HRP for Somalia, which took into account a much smaller population in need after the Post-Gu 2018 assessment, when drought and food security conditions had temporarily improved. FAO has therefore developed this Drought Action Plan to scale up its response to address time-critical needs in rural Somalia.



# Drought Action Plan



to assist  
**6 million people**



FAO requires  
**USD 144 million**



period  
**June–December 2019  
(7 months)**

FAO seeks USD 144 million to assist more than 6 million rural Somalis affected by the drought. This includes 2 million people to receive direct food security and livelihood support, while delivering emergency veterinary care to 32.7 million livestock belonging to around 4.3 million people. This Action Plan builds on priorities set within the 2019 HRP, adjusting FAO's activities and targets to address the growing needs in areas worst impacted by the drought.

The Plan has three overarching priorities.

- 1. Increase food access and protect rural livelihoods**, through cash-for-work and emergency livelihood packages for farmers, pastoralists and coastal communities, integrating unconditional cash transfers wherever possible (cash+).
- 2. Protect livestock assets**, through supplementary animal feeding, water trucking, supply of water bladders and countrywide supportive treatment, followed by vaccination against contagious caprine pleuropneumonia (CCPP).
- 3. Mitigate new shocks**, including by providing regional stocks of veterinary supplies, river embankment repair, and strengthening local preparedness against food-chain threats (e.g. fall armyworm).

The prioritized activities are time-bound to seasonal calendars and are therefore extremely urgent. Cash assistance must be scaled up rapidly to save lives, especially in remote rural areas. Seeds and other farm inputs must reach poor farmers in the north by July 2019: if they miss the *Karan* planting window, their next main cereal harvest would be pushed to November 2020. Assistance to pastoralists is also time critical. The combination of veterinary services, feed and water supply is needed immediately to keep livestock alive and producing milk, meat and income for poor households relying on their animals to survive.



to achieve  
**Priority 1**



FAO requires  
**USD 108 million**

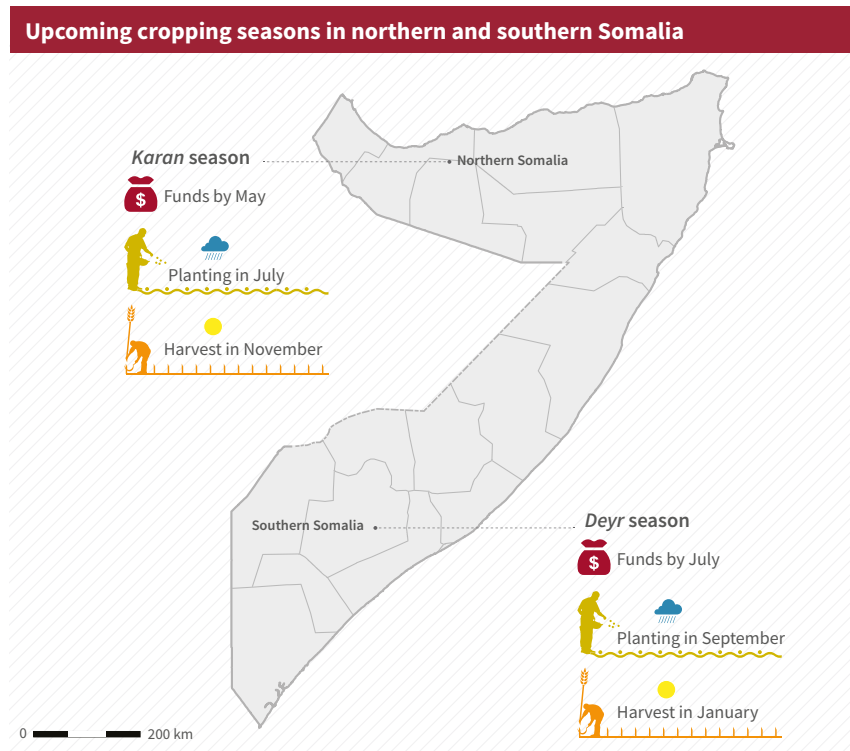
## Priority 1. Increase food access and protect rural livelihoods

FAO aims to increase immediate access to food, while preventing the collapse of rural livelihoods and restoring people's own food production within the shortest timeframe. Activities include:

- cash-for-work to repair productive rural infrastructure
- cash+ programmes that combine emergency livelihood assistance packages with unconditional cash transfers (UCTs)




### Cash-for-work and unconditional cash transfers (38 000 households)

FAO seeks to enroll 38 000 households (228 000 people) in Somalia in cash-for-work activities in 2019. The programme will put much-needed cash in people's pockets, while repairing infrastructure to help communities better cope with ongoing and future drought. FAO will ensure the inclusion of households unable to engage in physical labour by providing them with UCTs. Each household will receive monthly cash transfers for six months to access the minimum expenditure basket for food. Cash-for-work activities will primarily target northern and central pastoral areas, where alternative income opportunities are very limited. Most work focuses on rehabilitating water catchments for livestock, but also includes soil bunds, irrigation canals, feeder roads and activities to manage *Prosopis* (a highly invasive plant species).



Source: FAO, 2019

Table 2. Emergency livelihood assistance package summary

 <b>Farmers</b> <b>(148% scale up)</b>	 <b>Pastoralists</b> <b>(173% scale up)</b>	 <b>Coastal fishers</b> <b>(100% scale up)</b>
<b>72 500 households</b> <b>(435 000 people)</b>	<b>20 100 households</b> <b>(120 600 people)</b>	<b>3 000 households</b> <b>(18 000 people)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quality seeds (maize/sorghum, cowpea and vegetables)</li> <li>• farm tools (hoes and forks)</li> <li>• cultivation/irrigation services</li> <li>• 3–6 monthly cash transfers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supplementary feed blocks</li> <li>• milk storage containers</li> <li>• deworming for animals</li> <li>• 6 monthly cash transfers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• boats, safety and fishing gear</li> <li>• fish drying and processing kits</li> <li>• fish processing and cooking kits</li> <li>• 6 monthly cash transfers</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>All packages include livelihood training focused on climate-smart and sustainable practices, as well as training on improved household nutrition, covering infancy to old age.</b></p>		

### Cash and livelihood assistance (95 600 households)

In 2019, FAO aims to provide 76 550 households (459 300 people) with integrated cash and livelihood assistance packages under its cash+ programme, which is tailored to farmers, pastoralists and fishers. UCTs will be provided monthly for up to six months. FAO also plans to reach a further 19 050 households (114 300 people) with farming inputs only. This accounts for areas where cash is less prioritized but livelihood assistance remains crucial (IPC Phase 2), or where cash cannot be delivered due to security concerns. This assistance is extremely urgent across all livelihood zones due to people’s immediate need to access food.

### Farmers

There is a narrow funding window to assist farmers for the two remaining cropping seasons of 2019. Funds are needed by May for the *Karan* season in the north and by July for *Deyr* in the southern breadbasket. Monthly UCTs will be provided for three to six months, based on the duration of the lean season in the south versus the north. Families will receive quality seeds to grow a nutritious variety of food, including sorghum or maize (staples), cowpea (high in protein) and vegetables (rich in vitamins). Farmers will also receive vouchers to redeem cultivation or irrigation services, as well as tools to better work their land. For the ongoing *Gu* season, FAO is reaching more than 25 000 households with inputs that will help them secure a better harvest despite poor rains. In 2017, farmers supported with similar FAO livelihood packages during the drought achieved 74 percent higher sorghum yields in *Gu* than other poor farmers in their area. They produced enough to feed their families for six months and have surplus for sale to meet other urgent needs. Although drought

FAO encourages increased support along the coast, with a new cash+ package for coastal fishing communities.

can severely compromise yields, it is crucial to invest in farmers' potential to achieve a better harvest and maintain their livelihoods.


#### Pastoralists


This cash+ package deliberately targets the women, children, elders, disabled people and others who stay behind during seasonal migration periods (when men and boys move with most of the family's herd for pasture, water or trade), and are left with just a few sheep and goats as their main source of food. FAO will provide six monthly UCTs alongside supplementary feed blocks, milk containers and deworming for animals. Combined, the feed and deworming increase milk production when little forage is available. The mazzican containers help keep milk safe and fresh for longer. This assistance is mainly being channeled to purely pastoral areas of northern and central Somalia, where food security is expected to decline sharply in the coming months.

#### Coastal communities

For 2019, FAO proposes three complementary livelihood packages to assist coastal pastoral and fishing communities impacted by the drought and by Cyclone Sagar in northern Somalia in 2018. Fisheries receives little attention or funding in humanitarian contexts. This is a continual setback for poor coastal communities and needs to change, particularly in response to drought when livestock losses are high and alternative sources of food and income become especially vital. Very practical assistance packages that can have a high impact when combined with cash include: (i) boat packages, which comprise a small boat to fish near-shore (shared by three households), plus associated safety gear and fishing equipment; (ii) community fish drying and processing packages, shared among IDP and host community women; and (iii) household fish processing and cooking kits, packed in an easy-to-carry cooler box. When deployed together within a community, the benefits of these packages reinforce one another (from fish catch to value addition to consumption) and create social cohesion.



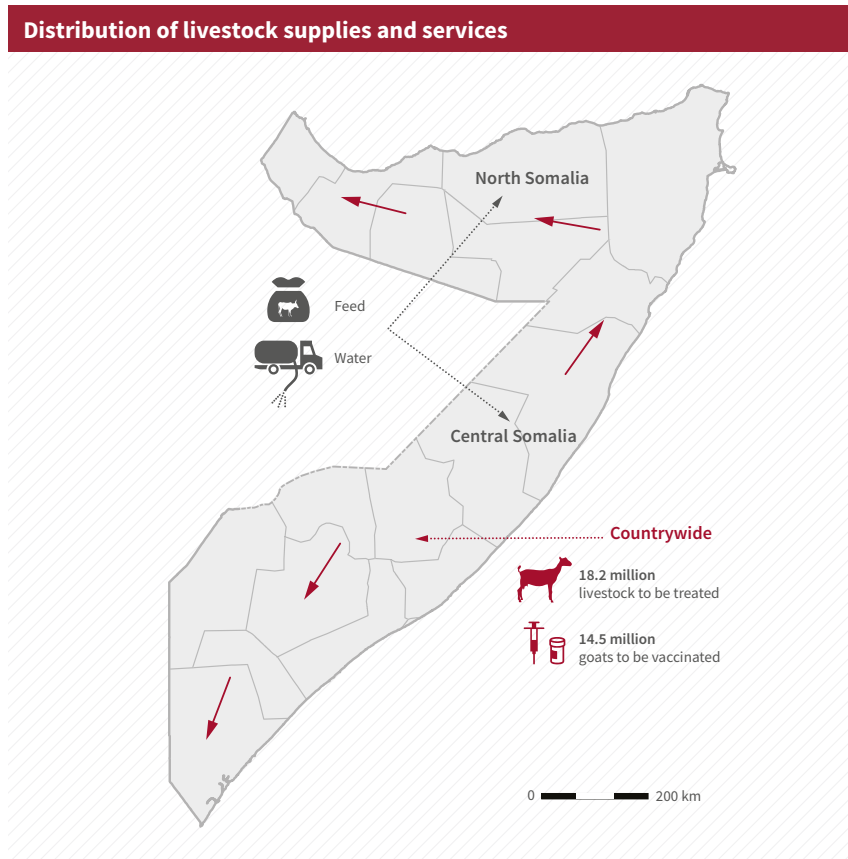
 to achieve  
**Priority 2**

 FAO requires  
**USD 23 million**

## Priority 2. Protect livestock assets

Pastoralists need urgent supplies and services to protect their livestock and related food sources. Prioritized actions include:

- supply of supplementary animal feed, water trucking and water storage tanks in northern and central Somalia
- countrywide animal health campaigns



Source: FAO, 2019

### Supplementary feed and water trucking (192 700 households)

Pastoralists in northern and central Somalia urgently need feed and water for their livestock. FAO aims to provide 42 700 households with rangeland cubes as a supplementary feed for small ruminants. The cubes contain key nutrients such as protein (15 percent), multivitamins and minerals that supplement grazing and boost production (particularly milk yield), resulting in rapid improvements to household food supply and nutrition. Each household will receive five 20-kg bags (sufficient for ten livestock for two months) and training. FAO will also provide fodder production and processing inputs to agropastoral communities, including hammer mills to transform crop residues into much-needed animal feed. FAO plans to truck up to 120 million litres of water to sustain 2.4 million livestock belonging to 150 000 households. Around 1 000 water bladders will be supplied to the

north, each with a holding capacity of 10 000 litres. These bladders are collapsible for easy transport and will be deployed to strategic watering sites.

### Supportive treatment and vaccination (up to 730 000 households, 32.7 million livestock)

Animal health campaigns must roll out quickly – in two stages – to prevent widespread livestock losses and further declines in animal productivity, including milk for daily consumption. First, livestock must be treated against common illness and bacterial diseases such as parasites and respiratory infections that spread quickly during drought. Once body conditions improve, goats must be vaccinated against CCPP, which spreads fast and can kill up to 90 percent of naïve infected animals. FAO seeks to treat 18.2 million livestock and vaccinate 14.5 million goats against CCPP. As of May, there was insufficient funding to undertake either of these two campaigns.



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to achieve  
**Priority 3**



FAO requires  
**USD 13 million**

### Priority 3. Mitigate new shocks

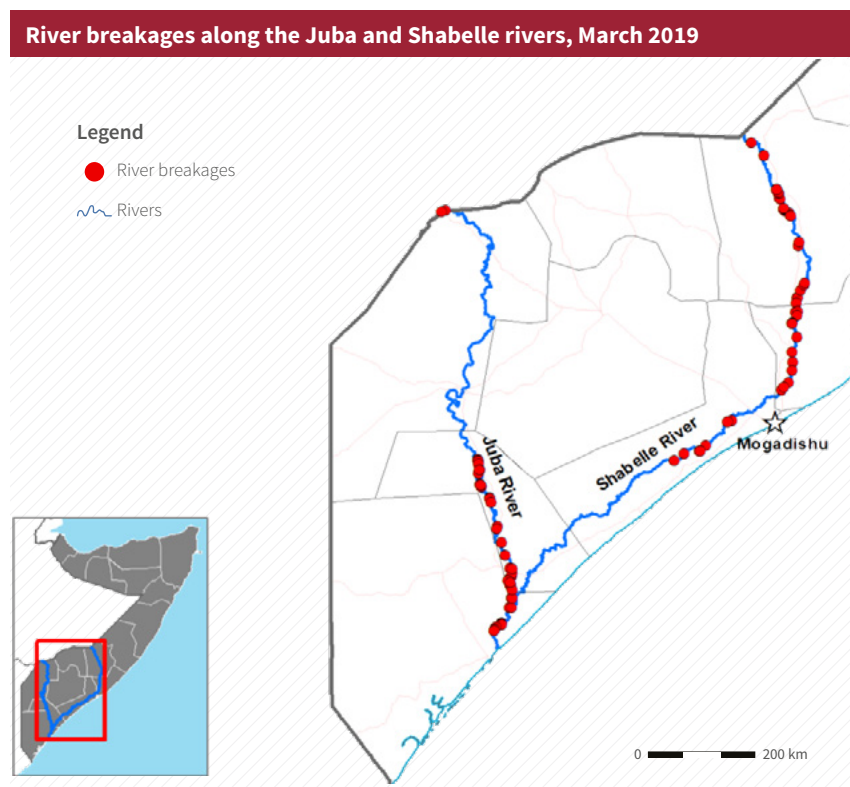
While responding to the drought, FAO is working with local authorities and communities to mitigate other threats to food security in 2019.

This includes:

- anticipating flood risks (which frequently follow drought)
- building local capacity to detect and respond early to plant and livestock pests or diseases

#### Closing river breakages ahead of *Deyr* rains

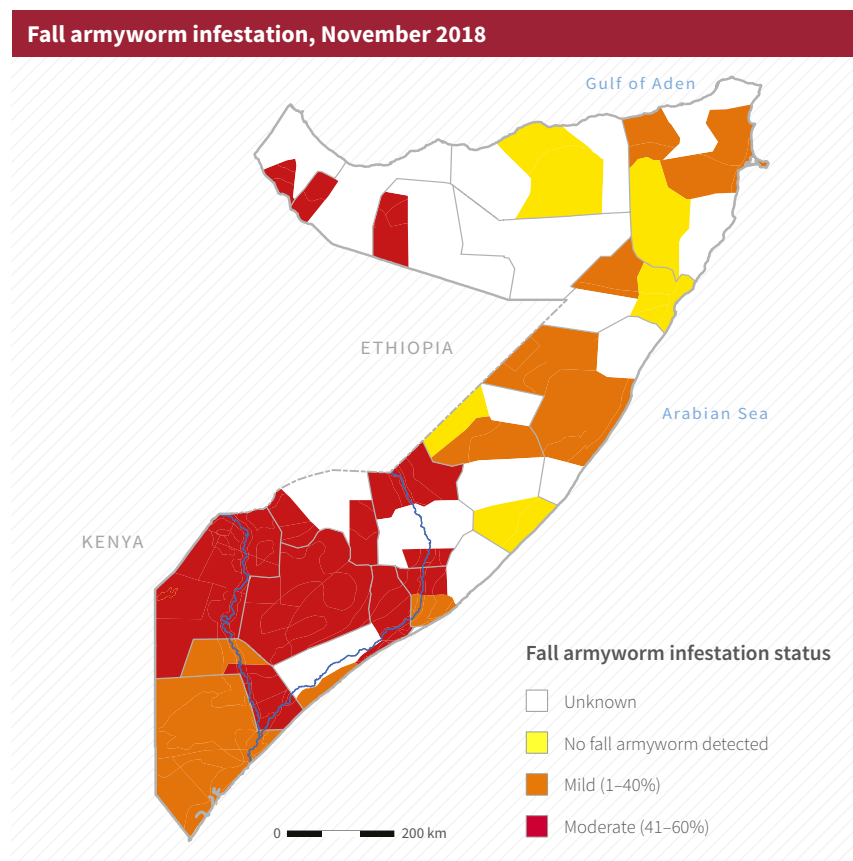
As of early May, there are 89 breakages along the Shabelle and Juba Rivers. The most critical – in terms of size, surrounding cropland and population density – should be urgently repaired ahead of *Deyr* rains. The 12 most critical along the Shabelle, for example, would protect some 10 000 hectares of farmland and 230 000 people living in these high flood-risk areas. Especially during drought when river levels are low, people cut into river banks to irrigate their farms. To discourage this from happening, FAO also aims to provide portable irrigation pumps to farmers in riverine areas.



Source: FAO, 2019

## Controlling fall armyworm

Fall armyworm continues to pose a serious threat to food security, especially affecting Somalia's staple food crops (maize and sorghum). In a recent impact assessment by the Somali Government and FAO, fall armyworm was present in all cereal producing states of Somalia. It is estimated that the pest damaged 20–40 percent of maize and 8–15 percent of sorghum cultivated during *Deyr* 2018 (with production losses valued at approximately USD 37 million). In 2019, it is essential that FAO continues to work with local authorities and communities to control fall armyworm, including by mobilizing local communities and ministry field staff to monitor and manage the pest in farmers' fields. One method for doing so is manual control of the larvae, which is an economically and environmentally viable way for poor farmers to control the pest and secure their crops.



Source: FAO, 2019

FAO's Drought Action Plan will be updated as the drought and humanitarian needs evolve.

### *Eradicating peste des petits ruminants (PPR)*

Somalia is at an advanced stage in contributing to eradicate PPR globally, having surveilled, reported and vaccinated against the disease annually since 2012. Similar efforts led to the eradication of Rinderpest in 2011. In line with the Global PPR Eradication Strategy, Somalia is shifting its approach in 2019 from routinely vaccinating animals to prepositioning strategic stocks of PPR vaccine and related equipment. Funding is needed to equip federal and state Ministries of Livestock with the necessary training and supplies (e.g. vaccine stocks, cold chain, rapid diagnostic kits). Without this, Somalia lacks the ability to control potential localized PPR outbreaks, which could lead to setbacks to significant progress made.

### *Preventing vector-borne livestock diseases*

When there is flooding, livestock risk contracting diseases carried by mosquitoes and biting flies, including Rift Valley fever. When drought was interrupted by severe riverine floods in 2018, it was vital to quickly source vector control treatment to protect livestock in riverine areas.



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# Saving livelihoods saves lives

## Contact

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### **Serge Tissot**

FAO Representative  
Mogadishu, Somalia  
FAO-SO@fao.org

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### **Dominique Burgeon**

Director, Emergency and Resilience Division and  
Strategic Programme Leader – Resilience  
Rome, Italy  
PSE-Director@fao.org

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