



## Focus story: Drought in Somalia



Dried up water wells in Berkad, Sanaag region  
Source: Rapid Inter Agency Assessments report



Hundreds of thousands of people have been affected by the ongoing severe drought situation which has hit parts of Puntland and Somaliland regions. This condition has aggravated an already challenging humanitarian situation in Somalia, which has led to the drastic rise in the number of people in need. The affected people need urgent intervention to avoid relapse into a crisis.

The drought situation is expected to exacerbate in the next months due to the depletion of water resources in these regions. There is an increased possibility of near-normal to below normal *Gu* rains in Somaliland and northern parts of Puntland, according to projections by SWALIM (Somalia Water and Land Information Management). The post-*Gu* (April-May) season analysis by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)/Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU), Somalia, published in October 2015, indicated dry conditions in north western parts of Somaliland and has classified these regions as being in “crisis” and “emergency” 2. The “areas that may experience dry condition”, as predicted by FAO/SWALIM have been experiencing drought. As forecasted, Woqooyi Galbeed and Awdal regions (also known as Maroodi-Jeh and Gabiley region) did not receive Dyer (September-December) rainfall, worsening the situation further.

The rural areas have been the most affected by the drought, whereas the direct impact of it on the urban populations and IDPs is minimal. It has also brought about negative outcomes on the affected population including, increased risks of conflicts over limited resources with direct protection implications. Hazardous coping strategies with increased stress due to drought has resulted in a rise in displacements. This arises against a backdrop of a complex and protracted humanitarian crisis in Somalia with an estimated 4.7 million people or 38 per cent of Somalis in need of assistance, including more than one million displaced persons.

Restricted humanitarian access due to insecurity also continues to affect and hinder the provision of assistance to the affected regions. The ban on road transportation of humanitarian supplies into Puntland from Somaliland continues to be a major challenge. Administrative impediments have also been on the rise and continue to result in delays and interruptions in aid programming, mainly in Puntland.

Somalia is predominantly susceptible to droughts, mainly because of its geographical location, the fragile environment, the variable climate and the political instability in the country. As a result, droughts always have catastrophic impacts on Somali populations. Recently, severe droughts in Somalia occurred in 1964, 1969, 1974, 1987, 1988, 2000, 2001, 2004, 2008 and 2011. Therefore, there is a need to develop more objective measures to reflect the real severity of droughts in the area. This is because without objective indicators, it is quite challenging to take suitable mitigation measures to decrease the effects of a drought or move towards any kind of drought monitoring and early warning.

### Cluster Challenges

- Lack of consistent reporting by cluster partners hampers the visibility of shelter cluster and effective/efficient coordination.
- Decreasing funding of shelter activities has grossly affected the capacity of cluster partners to respond whilst shelter needs have increased significantly due to forced evictions, conflicts and flooding.
- Restricted humanitarian access due to insecurity continues to affect the provision of assistance to the affected people in some parts of south and central Somalia.
- Emergency Shelter/NFI stocks need to be replenished to allow for further contingencies.
- IJA authorities need to finalize solutions for issuance of land since it has affected the shelter cluster interventions.

### Key Links : Who is doing what where in Shelter

Shelter maps: <https://www.sheltercluster.org/library/somalia-maps>

Shelter projects: <http://www.unhcr-nairobi-hub.org/toolkit/>