

IASC Principals Somalia and Horn of Africa Drought Communication & Advocacy Strategy September – Dec 2022

Background

On 11 August, the IASC declared a system-wide emergency activation (Scale-Up) for Somalia. The drought situation in Somalia has surpassed the 2010-11 and 2016-17 droughts in terms of duration and severity. Four consecutive failed rainy seasons have affected the entire population of Somalia, with particular concern for some 7 million people experiencing crisis levels of hunger and more than 1 million displaced in search of assistance. With a fifth and sixth consecutive rainy season projected to fail, Somalia is facing an unprecedented and catastrophic situation that will continue well into 2023.

As part of efforts to strengthen advocacy capacity within the IASC, OCHA and ICVA spearheaded this strategy with the participation of advocacy focal points across IASC member organizations. The group – named the Advocacy and Communications Team (ACT) – aims to galvanize efforts and attention to the Somalia response by developing a one-year advocacy plan. Our recommendation is to evolve this into a wider Horn of Africa strategy as this crisis cuts across three countries, including Kenya and Ethiopia. The crisis knows no borders: across the Horn of Africa, at least 36.1 million people have now been directly and adversely impacted by the drought, including 24.1 million in Ethiopia, 7.8 million in Somalia and 4.2 million in Kenya.

Building on advocacy and communication efforts at the national and regional levels, the IASC Principals have agreed on the urgent need to increase collective advocacy on the crisis. It is important to note that advocacy has been ongoing since March 2021. Building on lessons learned from 2010-2011 and 2016-2017, humanitarian partners raised the alarm and acted swiftly in response to early warnings as the 2020-2022 drought evolved.

The Somalia Humanitarian Fund allocated \$13.3 million to kick-start the response in March, while CERF allocated \$27 million in April. OCHA and ECHO organized two high-level roundtables—one in April 2021 and the other in April 2022, as well as donor visits to capitals by the Humanitarian Coordinator to advocate for swift action and ring the alarm.

Building on the advocacy of the last 18 months, this 12-month strategy will be updated each quarter to remain responsive of the situation on the ground. Initially, the priority objective was on calling for early action and urgent funding. Funding through the first months of 2022 was lower than at the same time during the 2016-2017 drought. In the face of dire under-funding, humanitarian partners leveraged any and all available resources to respond, including drawing on their internal reserves. This meant that famine was averted through the first four failed seasons of the drought. However, as the crisis has continued to escalate and ongoing inflation in Somalia created additional pressure on resources, the funding available has been inadequate to match the scale of the needs. Humanitarian needs are expected to escalate further through to at mid-2023 and donor support is required to enable effective humanitarian and recovery response.

Strategy

The overarching strategic goal is to leverage both the comparative advantages of individual IASC members and the collective voice of the IASC to boost public and private advocacy and ensure coherence around humanitarian diplomacy efforts.

The benefits of coordinated advocacy of UN and NGO leaders, including the Secretary-General, include:

- (a) amplification of key messages and calls to action increase the likelihood that these will be heard by decision-makers, among others;
- (b) uniformity and consistency in messaging makes the problem statement and recommended actions clearer to those in a position to act;
- (c) reduction of any discrepancy in messaging between IASC members, making it easier to promote collective action;
- (d) ability to be outspoken and to take bolder, forward-leaning positions which capitalize on “strength in numbers.”
- (e) strengthened risk identification and crisis communication management.

Communications & Advocacy objectives

Immediate objectives:

1. Articulate the devastating impact of famine for individuals and societies to raise funding and engage political will to prevent famine and facilitate humanitarian response.
2. Advocate for diversity of funding sources and flexible funding;
 - a. Ensure all sectors are fully funded: Alongside the promotion of financing for life-saving interventions, advocate for and emergency livelihood assistance, including the centrality of protection in the response as well as Gender Based Violence, and Protection of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment.
 - b. Ensure at least 25% of funds go to NGOs on the front line urgently and at scale;
 - c. Ensure the Pooled Funds are fully funded and
3. Provide evidence that the humanitarian system has scaled up and is able to deliver.
4. Advocate for improved humanitarian access and reduction of bureaucratic and administrative impediments from both donors and host governments to ensure principled and effective humanitarian response to people in need including in areas under the control of non-state armed groups

Medium term objectives

1. Ensure future early warnings are responded to with adequate, timely financing and action so that Somalia and HoA truly never again sees the spectre of famine.
2. Promote long term evidence-based sustainability and solutions (promoting a common agenda around resilience, nexus and climate adaptation transformation)
3. Ensuring the protection and safe and voluntary returns of IDPs

Target Groups

- Traditional and non-traditional donor states
- International Financial Institutions, including the World Bank
- Governments of affected states
- The public

Workplan

The workplan will be developed by the ACT by 10 October 2022.

Quarter 1:

The first phase of this strategy (Sept – Dec 2022) is focused on pressing for more action and broadening the donor support base during UNGA 2022 and in subsequent months, until the launch of the Global Humanitarian Overview and CERF High Level Event in December.

This can be achieved by way of several initiatives and actions including the Secretary-General's letter on the famine prevention to all Member States, high level visits to Somalia and the region by Principals with media, Member State briefings, media activities in key domestic media markets such as the UK.

Coordination & Implementation Modalities

The ACT co-chaired by ICVA/OCHA will develop this plan. At the country and level, advocacy will be coordinated through HCT, UNCG, IAWG on the Horn of Africa and other advocacy forums. All communication assets will be available via (<https://trello.com/b/IL2XWKvN/somalia-drought-famine-advocacy>).

By coordinating across humanitarian organisations and using a shared set of messages and products the IASC community can identify and exploit opportunities to communicate on the Somalia/Horn of Africa crisis consistently and coherently, bringing to bear the full power of the humanitarian system to our communications.

Given the rapidly evolving nature of the crisis, the key messages will be updated on a monthly basis in consultation with the Somalia HCT, IAWG and Somalia NGO Consortium and reviewed by the ACT.

ACT members are encouraged to share their calendar of events on the shared drive (insert link to calendar).

The progress on the workplan will be reviewed every three months at the ACT meeting to monitor progress and identify successes, learnings and gaps.

Key Messages

- Famine is at the door, and we have received our final warning. This is worse than the 2010-2012 crisis in which 250,000 people needlessly died from starvation. The latest analysis warns of famine just weeks away unless we provide more humanitarian assistance urgently.
- Even if no famine emerges, given rising death rates in many areas, the large size of the affected population and the likely duration of the crisis, the cumulative levels of excess mortality could be as high as in 2011.
- At least 1.5 million children across Somalia (nearly half the total population of children) are already facing acute malnutrition. Children in the worst affected parts of Somalia are dying now.
- Somali women and girls continue to pay a disproportionately high toll in this crisis with a heavy rise in reports of rape, sexual harassment and violence as they leave their homes to seek food. Their situation will continue to worsen without access to life-saving health and protection services, which remains starkly underfunded at just 10.5%.
- The immediate provision of sexual and reproductive health services and the mitigation and response to gender-based violence is NOT a luxury. It is a matter of life or death for these women and girls.
- The crisis is also heightening the risk of early, child and forced marriage, gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse. Gender-based violence is on the rise: 21 percent of women and girls who reported GBV cases in the first and second quarter of 2022 had been raped, and 60 percent of the women were subjected to Intimate Partner Violence from January to June of 2022.
- 66% of the population in need of protection services in Somalia are children at risk of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. 2.3 million children need immediate child protection services, yet the sector remains the least funded of the humanitarian response. It is critical that children's protection needs are not left behind, and investments are made to support and scale-up community-based prevention, risk mitigation, comprehensive case management services, and child-focused MHPSS services.

- Surveillance systems for disease, nutrition and mortality must be strengthened to ensure that resources reach where they are most needed to prevent disease and death.
- We must have immediate and safe access to all people in need, not just to those who have made the terrible decision to leave their homes.
- We need more funding, particularly for Somali organizations who have demonstrated capacity. They are the front-line responders and have access to areas the international community cannot reach. We know that needs will grow – the most cost-effective and sustainable approach is to empower local organizations with financing to respond
- After the 2011 famine, the people of Somalia were promised “never again”. This promise has been broken. We must invest in sustainable solutions and finance early action, so we don’t ever get in this situation again. This means taking health services to where people are, better water and sanitation structure, better primary healthcare – and find sources of new income and skills for this pastoralist society that climate change has made no longer viable.
- Ahead of COP27, we need to finally accept loss and damage responsibilities and take meaningful action as a matter of climate justice. Climate destruction is happening now. People are suffering now. Climate and adaptation funds need to go where they are needed the most.

Products

Key inter-agency products targeting Member States that underpin messaging and situation analysis:

1. ERC remarks to the press in Mogadishu: <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/under-secretary-general-humanitarian-affairs-and-emergency-relief-coordinator-martin-griffiths-remarks-press-delivered>
2. The cost of inaction - <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-cost-inaction-july-2022>
3. The Horn of Africa Regional Overview - <https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/horn-africa-drought-regional-humanitarian-overview-call-action-revised-21-september-2022> (Includes a timeline of early warning & action)
4. IAWG Joint Statement- <https://www.actionagainsthunger.org.uk/press-releases/joint-statement-global-donors-must-rise-to-the-occasion-and-prevent-starvation-and-death-for-millions-in-somalia-ethiopia-and-kenya>
5. OXFAM <https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/joint-statement-global-donors-must-rise-occasion-and-prevent-starvation-and-death>
6. OXFAM/SAVE - <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/dangerous-delay-2-the-cost-of-inaction-621373/>
7. WFP - <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/horn-africa-cannot-wait-wfp-scales-assistance-historic-drought-raises-famine-threat>
8. UNICEF - (Africa drought: Some children just ‘one disease away from catastrophe’ UNICEF warns | | UN News)
9. WHO - <https://www.who.int/emergencies/situations/drought-food-insecurity-greater-horn-of-africa>
10. Save the Children: <https://www.savethechildren.net/news/final-warning-children-s-lives-risk-across-somalia-country-door-famine>
11. Drought and food security crisis in the Horn of Africa: HPG roundtable communiqué <https://odi.org/en/publications/drought-and-food-security-crisis-in-the-horn-of-africa-hpg-roundtable-communiqu%C3%A9-7-june-2022/>
12. BRCiS Consortium - <https://www.nrc.no/shorthand/stories/between-a-shock-and-a-hard-place/index.html>

Advocacy Opportunities & Related Products/Activities

Date	Event/Opportunity (location)	Advocacy products/activity
August		
19	World Humanitarian Day	Media, campaign
19	CERF allocation of \$10 million	Media
25	EDG briefing to ODSG donors	Donor outreach
September		
31 (Aug) – 9	ERC Mission to Somalia	Media
7	Member State briefing from Mogadishu	ERC briefing
1 Sept	Letter from SG to all Heads of State/Govt warning of the impending risk of famine.	SG sent a letter to all Head of States/Head of Governments to sound the alarm on an extreme hunger crisis and called for urgent action to avert impending famine. The letter outlined the situation in 5 countries already facing catastrophic famine or famine-like conditions (Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Yemen). The SG appeals for flexible, unearmarked and early funding at scale, and the immediate release of funds already pledged. He noted that ‘We have a collective responsibility to do everything possible to mitigate and avert famine, but our window of opportunity is closing fast’.
5	IPC analysis on Somalia	https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/alerts-archive/issue-69/en/
5	ERC Remarks to Press from Mogadishu	https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/under-secretary-general-humanitarian-affairs-and-emergency-relief-coordinator-martin-griffiths-remarks-press-delivered
5	IASC statement on Somalia	https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/about-inter-agency-standing-committee/statement-principals-inter-agency-standing-committee-famine-somalia
6	NGO-Donor Roundtable Discussion Horn of Africa Drought Response	ICVA & PM Germany co-hosted roundtable
12	Global Mid-Year Food Update (WFP/FAO/EU) to be launched ahead of the round table	Key messages - https://trello.com/c/sRab42bo/31-grfc-2022-myu-in-brief
12	Round Table for Preventing Famine and Fighting Food Insecurity http://www.fightfoodcrises.net/events/road-to-unga-2022 https://trello.com/invite/b/NLPI5ITA/558be4c87ac0f55ceb0675a3a732d26e/gnafc-hltf-pre-unga-roundtable-12-september-2022	https://trello.com/b/NLPI5ITA/gnafc-hltf-pre-unga-roundtable-12-september-2022 https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/under-secretary-general-humanitarian-affairs-and-emergency-relief-coordinator-martin-griffiths-remarks-road-un-general-assembly-preventing-famine-and-fighting-food-insecurity
13	Member State briefing on Somalia	https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/under-secretary-general-humanitarian-affairs-and-emergency-relief-coordinator-martin-griffiths-remarks-member-states-briefing-humanitarian-situation-somalia-13-september-2022

15	Security Council briefing on conflict-induced food insecurity and the risk of famine	https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/under-secretary-general-humanitarian-affairs-and-emergency-relief-coordinator-martin-griffiths-remarks-security-council-briefing-conflict-induced-food-insecurity-and-risk-famine
18	Global Africa Business Initiative	
19	Tackling the Global Food and Malnutrition Crisis at Scale: Unlocking the Power of Staple Food Fortification through Innovations in Technology and Partnership (Gates Foundation)	
20 - 27	Opening of the 77th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 77)	
20	WFP/FAO Hotspots Report	Media - WFP presser at Palais and NY HQ https://www.wfp.org/news/food-crisis-tightens-its-grip-19-hunger-hotspots-famine-looms-horn-africa-new-report Second Joint Statement by the Heads of FAO, IMF, WBG, WFP, and WTO on the Global Food Security and Nutrition Crisis World Food Programme
20	NGO Open Letter on the Global Food Crisis - https://sdg2advocacyhub.org/actions/ngocs-o-open-letter-un-member-states-global-hunger	Joint CSO letter + PR https://genevasolutions.news/peace-humanitarian/one-person-dying-of-hunger-every-four-seconds-ngos-warn#:~:text=One%20person%20is%20estimated%20to,200%20NGOs%20warned%20on%20Tuesday.
20 onwards	UNGA Campaign Large coalition forming - #HungryforAction - including One, Global Citizen, SDG2 Hub, Power of Nutrition, NGOs etc.	Campaign for UNGA which is mainly on visibility, establishing brand identity of the campaign and some stunts to set a campaign pathway through to G20 + COP One + GC have people in NY to do the stunts etc.
21	Responding to the Urgent Humanitarian Needs in Horn of Africa	https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/under-secretary-general-humanitarian-affairs-and-emergency-relief-coordinator-martin-griffiths-remarks-high-level-side-event-responding-urgent-humanitarian-needs-horn-africa-un-general-assembly
21	Global Citizen Concert	As per above on #HungryforAction campaign
22	OCHA/Italy/UK --High-level Event on Preventing and Fighting Food Insecurity	
20	US high-level event on famine prevention and food security	
23	Tackling a 'perfect storm' of humanitarian crises: expanding the resource base in the face of exploding needs while strengthening resilience	

Last week Sept	Photographic mission by Giles Clark to Somalia to get powerful stories for placement in key media	Aim is to leverage public sentiment with powerful story of a child to feature in NYT etc. Giles is with Getty Images and we did the same with Yemen and Nick Kristof in 2018.
Sept	Social media campaign using the voices of local people	ACT is working on a social media campaign that uses the voices of people in Somalia speaking out (and Somalia diaspora influencers) that can then be amplified by international organisations.
October		
14 – 16	2022 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group	
6 – 7 Oct	Beyond Food Crises: Addressing food crises in Eastern Africa from a HDP perspective 6-7 October 2022	https://www.icpac.net/events/regional-event-for-east-africa-beyond-food-crises/
7 Oct	MS event in Geneva with USG	
11 Oct	League of Arab States-UN, Cairo	
10 – 16 Oct	World Bank meeting	
tbc	High-Level Event on Preventing Famine in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen	
November		
7 – 18	UN Climate Change Conference 2022 (UNFCCC COP 27)	
11 Nov		OCHA side event - Climate threats and opportunities in the Horn of Africa with FAO, UNICEF and WFP
December		
1	2023 GHO Global and multiple launches	
5 – 9	Humanitarian Week (CERF HLPE, Underfunded)	
6	UNHCR pledging conference	
6 – 8	10th Global Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action	
7 – 8	UNHCR HC Dialogue	