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HORN OF AFRICA EXPERIENCES FIVE CONSECUTIVE SEASONS OF DROUGHT FOR FIRST TIME IN HISTORY

Washington, D.C. – Grim rainfall totals for October-December 2022 indicate the eastern Horn of Africa has officially experienced five consecutive seasons of drought, marking the longest sequence of dry seasons ever recorded in the region.

The Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) was one of several agencies that [predicted the poor rainy season](#) across Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia following the historic below-average [March-May 2022 season](#).

“Five inches or so of rain, over three months, in a very hot region, is very close to no rainfall,” Chris Funk, Research Director for the Climate Hazards Center at the University of California, Santa Barbara, [wrote](#). “According to our rainfall data, which extends reliably back to about 1950, a sequence of five dry seasons has never happened before.”

FEWS NET’s latest [Seasonal Monitor for Somalia](#) revealed long delays in the onset of rains, erratic rainfall distribution, and significant rainfall deficits throughout the country. Across the region, seasonal rains were insufficient to support the growth of crops, the fertility of livestock, or the replenishment of critical water resources.

Funk and co-authors described rainfall totals for October-December 2022 as, “clearly far below a total adequate for healthy crop and rangeland production.”

For months, FEWS NET has warned that the historic multi-year drought is likely to continue well into 2023. Although ongoing [La Niña](#) conditions – one of the drought’s main driving forces – are expected to dissipate in the coming months, the effects on the upcoming wet season are likely to remain significant. FEWS NET climate scientists also expect a drier-than-normal wet season in March-May 2023, due to exceptionally warm west Pacific sea surface temperatures, which would mark a historic sixth consecutive season of drought.

As the exceptional drought likely enters its third year, emergency response efforts in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia [remain severely underfunded](#). Humanitarians continue to signal that a more robust and unified global response is urgently needed if a significant loss of life is to be averted.

For the latest information on Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia and the ongoing drought situation in the eastern Horn of Africa, follow FEWS NET on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) and [subscribe](#) for updates.

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About FEWS NET: FEWS NET, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network, is a leading provider of early warning and analysis on acute food insecurity around the world. Created in 1985 by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in response to devastating famines in East and West Africa, FEWS NET provides unbiased, evidence-based analysis to governments and relief agencies who plan for and respond to humanitarian crises. FEWS NET analysts and specialists work with scientists, government ministries, international agencies, and NGOs to track and publicly report on conditions in the world's most food-insecure countries. The content of this press release does not necessarily reflect the view of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government. *For more information, visit: www.fews.net.*