



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

December 13, 2022

Contact: Hannah Button, Communications Team Lead,
Famine Early Warning Systems Network

Email: hbutton@few.net

DEATH TOLL RISES DESPITE NO OFFICIAL FAMINE DECLARATION IN SOMALIA

Washington, D.C. – Extreme food insecurity continues to claim the lives of people in Somalia amid an [unprecedented multi-season drought across the eastern Horn of Africa](#). Although humanitarian assistance has helped to delay an [official Famine \(IPC Phase 5\) declaration](#) in Somalia, experts warn the thresholds for Famine are likely to be met in April-June 2023 as current relief funding dries up.

In its latest [Somalia Alert](#), the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) reports that high levels of acute malnutrition and hunger-related deaths are being exacerbated by concurrent disease outbreaks in the most vulnerable regions of the country.

Up to 8.3 million people in Somalia will need urgent humanitarian food assistance through at least mid-2023 to prevent the death toll from rising.

“The international community’s response to the [Famine Projection in September](#) has made an important impact; however, the ongoing hunger crisis in Somalia is truly unprecedented and warrants an even stronger humanitarian response to prevent more lives from being lost as the drought likely continues into the new year,” FEWS NET Team Leader Kiersten Johnson said.

The fifth consecutive failed rainy season projected for October-December has been realized, with rains performing 40-70 percent below average across Somalia. The latest forecasts indicate the drought will continue with an [unprecedented sixth below-average rainy season](#) expected during Somalia’s April-June rainy season.

[Over 1.3 million people in Somalia](#) have been displaced by the drought since early 2021. Many of these people are now living in densely populated displacement sites without safe water or adequate sanitation, which combined with extreme food insecurity, water scarcity, and ongoing outbreaks of measles and cholera, are contributing to increased death rates.

The latest assessment further indicates there is a [Risk of Famine](#) in several additional areas in southern and central Somalia.

“The number of households affected by this drought continues to grow every day,” Johnson said. “The lack of an official Famine declaration should not send the message that all is well in Somalia. Child malnutrition and hunger-related deaths are already occurring, and if humanitarian aid slows down early next year, the world will witness even worse outcomes.”

If government agencies and international donors fail to provide higher levels of relief funding in 2023, it is within the realm of possibility that hunger-related deaths could exceed that of the 2011-12

Famine in Somalia – when [nearly 260,000 people](#) died – without the thresholds for Famine ever officially being met.

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.

###

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.*