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## **FAMINE EXPECTED TO EMERGE IN SOMALIA IN LATE 2022 IN ABSENCE OF URGENT ASSISTANCE**

Washington, D.C. – Somalia’s ongoing food emergency is expected to reach Famine ([IPC Phase 5](#)) levels in October-December 2022, [international agencies warned on Monday](#) as starvation, acute malnutrition, and deaths increase with a [fifth consecutive poor rainy season expected in the Horn of Africa](#) later this year.

More than 7 million people in Somalia already require urgent multi-sectoral assistance<sup>1</sup> to prevent acute malnutrition and reduce hunger-related deaths, according to the International Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), the internationally-recognized partnership of food security agencies, NGOs, and government agencies that conducted the analysis that led to Monday’s announcement.

“In the absence of a significant scale-up of humanitarian food assistance, we’d expect to see an alarming acceleration of death and destitution in the coming months as more and more families exhaust their last options for survival,” Lark Walters, FEWS NET Decision Support Advisor, said.

Although current levels of acute malnutrition among children and hunger-related deaths have not yet reached the IPC’s technical definition of a Famine<sup>2</sup>, Monday’s projection of Famine signifies that those thresholds are likely to be reached and surpassed between October-December 2022, under the assumption that no humanitarian food assistance will be delivered in November and December.

The IPC expects Famine to emerge in Somalia’s Baidoa and Burhakaba districts, and within settlements of newly arrived, internally displaced people in Baidoa, all of which are located in the southern Bay Region. Two years of severe drought, protracted conflict, and high staple food prices in these predominantly agropastoral areas have decimated people’s ability to raise livestock, grow crops, and buy enough food to survive. Somalia’s Bay Region was also part of the epicenter of the 2011 Famine that experts estimate [claimed the lives of more than 250,000 people](#).

Food security analysts also warn that even if the technical thresholds for Famine – the most severe of five phases for official classification of acute food insecurity – are not reached, a large-scale humanitarian response is still critically needed to treat and prevent acute malnutrition among

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<sup>1</sup> Humanitarian response must address multi-sectoral needs that emerge as a result of drought and interact with starvation to cause death. These needs include treatment for outbreaks of disease, provision of water for human consumption, provision of access to sanitation services, and therapeutic treatment of acute malnutrition.

<sup>2</sup> Famine (IPC Phase 5) occurs when at least 20 percent of the population in a given area have an extreme lack of food; the Global Acute Malnutrition prevalence (measured by weight-for-height z-score) exceeds 30 percent; and mortality (measured by the Crude Death Rate) exceeds 2 deaths per 10,000 people per day.

children and limit hunger-related deaths that occur at Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and Emergency (IPC Phase 4) levels.

“Because a number of areas in Somalia have persisted in Crisis and Emergency for so long, the accumulation of deaths during those phases can easily surpass those that occur during a shorter period of technical ‘Famine,’” Walters said.

Monday’s announcement is the first time the IPC has projected a Famine for a future period in the absence of an ongoing Famine declaration.

“There is a notable difference between a Famine declaration and a projection of Famine,” FEWS NET Team Leader Kiersten Johnson said. “In this case, the IPC is projecting a Famine before the outcome actually materializes. That means the worst-case scenario could still potentially be avoided if humanitarian assistance can be delivered to the worst-affected areas of the country in time.”

Humanitarian agencies have warned for nearly two years that millions of people in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia urgently need humanitarian food assistance. Monday’s announcement is a stark reminder of how the funding and provision of assistance have failed to keep pace with the scale and severity of needs. Without additional relief funding, Somalia will face its second Famine in just over a decade.

*For more information on how to accurately report on Famine projections, see the attached Famine Review explainer. For the latest information on 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](http://www.fews.net).*