



## Famine (IPC Phase 5) is expected in parts of Bay Region unless humanitarian assistance urgently reaches people most in need

**5 September 2022, Mogadishu** – Based on integrated food security, nutrition and mortality surveys conducted in June and July 2022 and subsequent IPC analysis, agropastoral populations in Baidoa and Burhakaba districts and displaced populations in Baidoa town of Bay Region in Somalia are projected to face Famine (IPC Phase 5) between October and December 2022 in the absence of significant humanitarian assistance reaching people most in need. This Famine projection was made by a multi-disciplinary team of technical experts working as part of the Somalia IPC Technical Working Group (IPC TWG). The analysis and evidence for the Famine projection were subsequently reviewed and technically vetted by the Famine Review Committee (FRC) – a panel of independent international food security and nutrition experts.

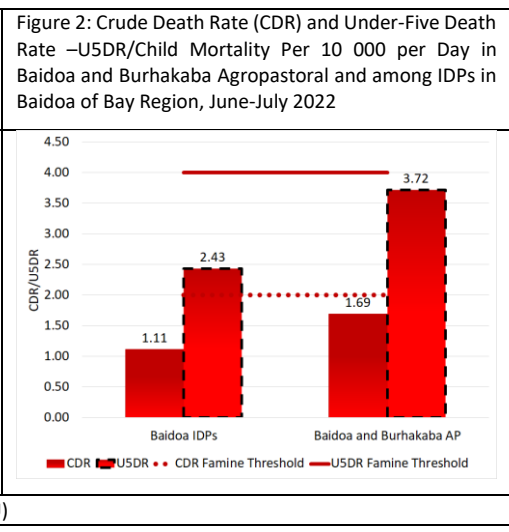
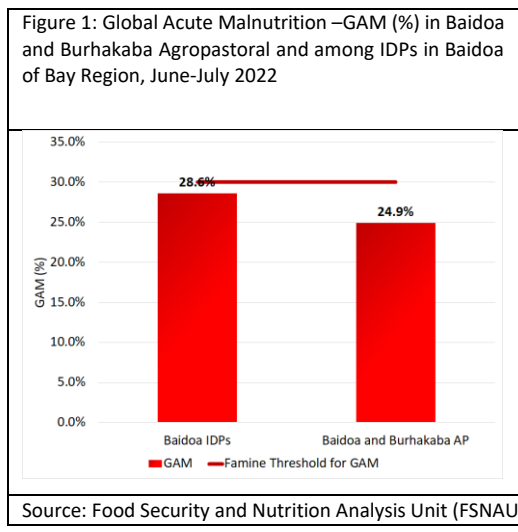
The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) defines Famine (IPC Phase 5) as an extreme deprivation of food, in which starvation, death, destitution and extremely critical levels of acute malnutrition are evident. A Famine classification (IPC Phase 5) is the highest phase of the IPC Acute Food Insecurity scale and is classified when: (1) an area has at least 20% of households facing an extreme lack of food, (2) at least 30% of children suffering from acute malnutrition, and (3) deaths of two adults or four children for every 10,000 each day due to outright starvation or to the interaction of malnutrition and disease.

Unlike a Famine declaration that is reflective of a collective failure, a Famine projection signals a narrow window of opportunity to act in order to prevent what could otherwise become a full-fledged Famine in Bay region in a few months.

The humanitarian situation in Bay region and other parts of Somalia has been deteriorating in recent months as the level of humanitarian assistance fails to keep pace with rising levels of need, and as the coping capacity of the most vulnerable is exhausted due to the combined impact of four consecutive seasons of poor rainfall, sharp increases in food prices, and conflict.

The results of the integrated surveys conducted in June and July 2022 in Baidoa and Burhakaba districts and among displaced populations in Baidoa town indicate levels of acute malnutrition and mortality that are indicative of Emergency (IPC Phase 4) – see Figures 1 and 2.

Most food security outcome indicators indicate Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes, indicative of moderate to large food consumption gaps even in the presence of ongoing humanitarian assistance. The 2022 *Gu* season harvest in July 2022 in Bay region has failed (less than 20% of long-term average). Poor agropastoral households have been trying to cope with the situation through consumption of immature



crops, gathering of bush products (wild food) for consumption and income, selling productive animals and other assets, selling roofing materials (thatched roof) as animal fodder, increased begging, and the distress migration of entire households. Prices of local cereals in Bay Region have been abnormally high for several months in a row (234% above average in July 2022), thereby reducing the purchasing power of most households.

Recent climate forecasts indicate a likely below average rainfall during the forthcoming October to December 2022 *Deyr* season, for a record fifth consecutive season. As a result, crop and livestock production prospects and income from agricultural employment are expected to be poor in Bay region through at least the first quarter of 2023.

Additionally, the projection of Famine in Baidoa and Burhakaba districts is based largely on currently available information that minimal assistance will be distributed in Bay in November and December due to funding constraints. While the Famine projection implies that special attention and priority be given to Bay Region, urgent scaling up of assistance is also required to address worsening humanitarian conditions and rising needs in other parts of Somalia.

With five consecutive seasons of poor rainfall, exhausted coping capacities of affected communities, depletion of livelihood assets and other exacerbating factors, humanitarian assistance will be required to address high levels of needs beyond December 2022.

Bay Region has a history of Famine. It was one of the regions where Famine claimed thousands of lives in 2011. Bay region was also the epicenter of the humanitarian crisis in 2017 when severe drought led to agropastoral and displaced populations facing a Risk of Famine, which was only averted due to timely, robust and sustained humanitarian assistance.

For more information, please contact: Willi Swanson, Communications Specialist, FAO Somalia, Tel: +254 -20-4000000, email: [William.Swanson@fao.org](mailto:William.Swanson@fao.org); Lark Walters, Decision Support Advisor, Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), email: [somalia@fews.net](mailto:somalia@fews.net); Petroc Wilton (Communication Officer), World Food Programme Somalia Email: [petroc.wilton@wfp.org](mailto:petroc.wilton@wfp.org), Tel: + 254 110909484 or Frank Nyakairu, IPC Communication Team Leader, IPC Global Support Unit (IPC GSU), Tel +39 06 57 05 07 91, email: [Frank.Nyakairu@fao.org](mailto:Frank.Nyakairu@fao.org)