

REPORT ON DROUGHT FIELD MONITORING SITUATION IN PUNTLAND

27 November – 1 December 2025



INTRODUCTION

A joint drought monitoring mission was conducted from 27 November – 01 December 2025. The findings of the report are based on information gathered by the teams through interviews with local authorities, community representatives, key informants, community meetings, group discussions and direct observations in each location that was visited. The mission comprising UN, Cluster leads and NGOs and led by OCHA and Drought Inter-Ministerial technical team was divided into four teams from Garowe.

More than 70 percent of livelihoods primarily pastoral have collapsed, severely undermining household resilience. According to the FSNAU Post-Gu' 2025 Food and Nutrition IPC analysis, over one million people in Puntland are facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or Emergency (IPC Phase 4) conditions representing nearly one-third of Somalia's total food-insecure population. Rising malnutrition, disease outbreaks, and secondary displacement into Garowe, Bossaso, and Qardho underscore the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation across the state.

Puntland continues to experience severe drought conditions following four consecutive seasons of failed or below-normal rainfall. The recently concluded 2025 Deyr rains were delayed, poor, erratic, and ended

prematurely, leaving most rural and pastoral communities without adequate pasture or water. The severe drought has affected over one million people in Puntland. Generally, the rains were delayed, and the performance was poor in terms of coverage and distribution in most of the areas visited including parts of Northern Inland Pastoral and Nugaal Valley and northwest of Hawd Livelihood Zone. This aggravated the already poor conditions that resulted from below-average 2024 Deyr rains. An initial appeal issued MoHADM on 13 January 2025 was followed by another appeal from the Vice President of Puntland State of Somalia on 11 November 2025, reaffirming MoHADM's earlier request to the humanitarian partners to provide assistance to drought affected communities.

The situation is alarming in Puntland regions, where more than 1,296,573 people are affected and 310,000 children under five years are suffering. According to monitoring assessment livestock have migrated from across Puntland to rural areas of Somali Region of Ethiopia in search of water and pasture. This sudden influx is placing heavy pressure on host communities, with further arrivals anticipated and some families reportedly moving onward toward Ethiopia. Agro-pastoral and pastoral communities were the worst affected. Most rural and pastoral settlements continue to face severe water shortages, especially those settlements that depend on Berkads. According to the field monitoring teams the price of water in most of the settlements has risen from USD 8 to USD 13 per barrel and this is likely to increase if the rain continues to delay. The drought's intensification coincides with severe funding cuts that have forced humanitarian partners to scale back or suspend food and nutrition pipelines, further compounding community vulnerability.

Composition of the teams participating drought Field Monitoring Assessment.

- OCHA, WFP, UNICEF, WHO, ASAL, SCI, ADEC, SMWCDO, TASS, SOHREF, ACF, OXFAM, World Vision, CARE, NRC, Islamic Relief, PDON, NCA, SRCS, SWA, & Species Saviour Initiative (SSI).
- Government line ministries: MoHADM, MOIFAD, Ministry of Water, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Livestock, District Mayors.

Overall objective

The overall objective of the mission was to monitor the impact of the drought across Puntland regions, focusing on the severity of water scarcity, depletion of grazing land, livestock conditions, and disruptions to basic services.

Specific objectives of the mission were to:

- Collect evidence-based information, including photographs, community feedback, and field observations, to support government authorities, humanitarian partners, and coordination platforms in prioritizing and mobilizing urgent assistance.
- Identify gaps and emerging needs

Summary of key findings

- The drought has affected an estimated 216,095.5 households (1,296,573 people) in pastoralists and urban villages.

- 80 per cent of Berkads, which are the main sources of water for most of the villages and small towns, are dried up.
- An estimated 50 per cent of the students from the drought affected populations have dropped out from the schools due to the migration of their families.
- The price of livestock has decreased from US\$ 50 to US\$ 20 between June 2025 and November 2025, due to lack of market and physical weaknesses of the livestock.
- This has exacerbated the situation and affected the lives of many poor pastoralist and urban villagers.
- Livelihoods impacted via livestock mortality, reduced fishing returns in coastal pockets, and shrinking farm outputs. The drought has undermined seasonal labor and market exchange, pushing more households into debt and debt-linked food purchases
- The price of water in most of the settlements has risen from US\$ 8 to US\$ 13 per barrel and this is likely to increase if the rain continues to delay.
- Malnutrition rates in drought hit areas and caseloads of malnourished children admitted into nutrition centers in Puntland have steadily increased due to the drought.

Food Security and livelihood

- Drought disrupted the pastoralist and poor host community livelihood activities and increased vulnerability.
- The failure of pasture has decimated livestock herds—the primary livelihood and asset base. This has triggered a sharp rise in acute malnutrition, internal displacement, and destitution. Households are unable to meet basic daily food requirements.
- Large numbers of livestock have died or migrated long distances in search of pasture. In some areas, livestock miscarriage was reported and other areas culling of newborn herds were reported.
- Food assistance coverage has declined due to funding limitations in Puntland where many villages previously supported by WFP are no longer receiving aid.
- Families are resorting to distress sales of remaining livestock, accumulating debt, or skipping meals placing children and pregnant/lactating women at heightened risk.
- The worst affected people are low-income earners who rely on providing casual labour and informal trade.
- There is mass movement from rural areas in search of pasture for their livestock.
- Some households are borrowing food from traders and relatives from point of displacement in Puntland regions.

WASH

- In Puntland the assessment teams observed that most surface water sources including water storages (berkads) and wells have dried up.
- Access to quality and safe water is an immediate need in drought affected communities, as a significant proportion of households do not have access to sufficient water to meet emergency standards.
- The assessment teams noted that the water situation is deteriorating in terms of quantity and quality.
- Most of the communities visited were stressed with lack of constant sources of water and mainly depend on seasonal rainwater.
- There were a few berkads with minimal water of poor quality and unfit for human consumption.
- Shallow wells are dried up due to decreasing water table in Puntland. Berkads were cleaned in December 2024 to prepare for rains and fresh water, however, communities are concerned that all berkads are caving in and cracking especially in eastern Sanaag and Karkaar regions.

Health and Nutrition

- Malnutrition signs were observed the drought affected areas for both women and children. The assessment teams noted that TSFP suspension by the WFP will exacerbate already alarming acute malnutrition for U5 children. Due to funding gap WFP stopped total MAM services. This critical service gap will impact thousands of beneficiaries of U5 Children and pregnant lactating mothers.
- Increase in Disease Outbreaks: Measles, diphtheria, and pertussis cases have been reported, particularly among nomadic populations with limited access to care and due to lack of incentives, staff retention challenges, and medicine shortages
- More than 295 health facilities and nutrition facilities across Puntland are in gap following aid cuts earlier this year, while many facilities are facing serious stock out of medical supplies following increased utilization of services as drought prevails.

Protection and Shelter.

- Critical GBV Service Gaps: Most communities lack safe spaces, case management services, and health facilities for survivors. Protection risks are high, particularly in remote villages and IDP settlements.
- Lighting and Safety Concerns: Women and girls travel long distances for water or to open defecation areas at night due to lack of lighting and latrines—significantly increasing GBV risks.
- Increased Vulnerability of Female-Headed Households: As many men migrate to towns in search of work, women remain with children in isolated settlements, facing heightened economic and protection risks.
- Most of the drought affected families live collectively with host families. Families who do not afford to migrate due to high cost of transportation have built spontaneous settlements next to their relatives in the villages and they require NFI kits.

- Shelters are partially destroyed, making them susceptible to wind, heat and cold. Most of the displaced populations do not have blankets, plastic sheets, bed mats and jerry cans.

Recommendation

- There is an immediate need to support drought-affected communities to improve access to adequate and adequately diverse food sources.
- Access to quality and safe water is an immediate need in drought affected communities, as a significant proportion of households do not have access to sufficient water to meet emergency standards.
- Conduct emergency repairs to non-functional water sources and install urgent water storage and distribution infrastructure.
- Initiate and fund immediately, targeted water trucking to the most affected communities.
- Provide fuel support to functional boreholes to ensure 24/7 operation and Implement Cash-for-Water programs to maintain affordability.
- Food assistance & cash transfers (immediate to short term): Provide the most vulnerable households with unconditional cash transfers (where markets function) and in-kind food for remote communities
- Mass nutrition and health outreach: Deploy mobile OTP/TSFP teams; resupply RUTF and medicine stocks to health centers; conduct targeted vaccination catch-ups (diphtheria, measles, pertussis) in affected localities. Rationale: health facility closures and outbreak reports demand immediate public health action.
- Livestock protection & veterinary assistance: Distribute emergency fodder, conduct vaccination and treatment campaigns to limit further animal losses. Rationale: livestock remains the primary asset and income for pastoral households; preventing avoidable losses is essential for recovery.
- WASH + protection: Install emergency latrines and improve site drainage and waste management in IDP settlements; distribute hygiene & dignity kits; install solar lighting in key communal areas to reduce GBV risk during water collection. Rationale: Protection risks and AWD threats are linked to poor WASH and lack of lighting.
- Education support: Reopen and support schools in affected villages with teacher incentives, school feeding and distribution of scholastic materials. Rationale: school closures were observed in multiple districts

Photos Annex



