Arab food security monitoring framework

Country reviews

Somalia

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Key Messages

The monitoring framework highlights that food security is a challenge in Somalia, as the average dietary energy supply is very low and the country is still experiencing sociopolitical instability. The availability of data is an impediment for proper food security monitoring. The country profile reviews the impact of COVID-19, early measures against it and their effect on the food situation.

Introduction

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and its partners developed the Arab Food Security Monitoring Framework that helps countries assess their food security situation despite its complex and multidimensional nature.[1] The Monitoring Framework is an outcome of the project entitled "Promoting Food and Water Security through Cooperation and Capacity Development in the Arab Region", implemented in collaboration and partnership with Arab countries, the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), academia and other experts, and with the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

The framework builds on the globally agreed upon definition of food security as existing "when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life",[2] which, as defined, comprises four dimensions, namely availability, access, utilization, and stability, can be evaluated at individual, household, national, regional, or global levels and can be seasonal, transitory or chronic. The framework was developed over a period of three years and involved consultations with more than 200 Arab and international experts. It involved a wide-ranging literature review to account for the latest thinking and experiences in assessing and monitoring food security at national, regional and global levels as well as a mapping of past and present policies, strategies and action plans.

The encompassing review led to the development of a comprehensive monitoring framework that tracks food security at different spatial levels, considers its four dimensions and accounts for both individual and household food security while facilitating a follow-up of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The end result was the Monitoring Framework that expresses food security and nutrition as a function of a multitude of indicators spread in its four dimensions, though approximately five to six indicators under each dimension account for most of the variations and thus are more consequential than the rest. Most of the selected indicators are already widely used globally to monitor aspects of the food system, and the SDGs and other plans of actions are used by major global institutions as development, economic, social, health, or environmental indicators. It was also ensured that the indicators are measurable, relevant to the Arab context and available for at least 50 per cent of Arab countries or the regional population, or both.

1 Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), 2019. Tracking Food Security in the Arab Region (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2019/4). Beirut. Available at https://www.unescwa.org/publications/tracking-food-security-arab-region.

2 Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), 2009. Report of the Committee on World Food Security: Final version. Agenda item III, Thirty-fifth Session of the Committee on World Food Security, 14, 15 and 17 October 2009, CFS:2009/2 Rev.2. Rome.

The 24 indicators that were selected are split into a core pillar with three ex post or outcome indicators — prevalence of undernourishment, moderate or severe food insecurity and obesity, while the remaining 21 ex ante or causal indicators were further split into the four food security dimensions as shown below. All the indicators are global in nature while catering to regional specificities and are grouped as follows:

- **The Core Pillar** comprises three outcome indicators that provide a picture of the prevailing food security and nutrition situation resulting from policies and programmes being implemented as reflected in the form of malnutrition – undernutrition (low caloric intake), overnutrition (excess caloric intake) or nutrient deficiency (low nutrient intake);

1 Core Indicators (CO)

Code	Indicator description	Short name	SDG linkage
CO1	Prevalence of undernourishment Ⓡ %	Undernourishment	2.1.1
CO2	Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity measured using FIES Ⓡ %	Food insecurity	2.1.2
CO3	Prevalence of obesity in the adult population (18 years and older) Ⓡ %	Obesity	

Ⓡ : Reversed During Normalization

- **The Availability** dimension comprises six indicators reflecting the supply side of food, namely, physical food inflow and outflow at macro and micro levels through production, trade, distribution, and others;

2 Food Availability Indicators (AV)

Code	Indicator description	Short name	SDG linkage
AV1	Primary wheat yield as a percentage of potential achievable yield - %	Yields	2.3.1
AV2	Agriculture Orientation index for government expenditures - Index	Agriculture expenditure	2.a.1
AV3	Food losses (% total food available) Ⓡ %	Food loss	12.3
AV4	Average dietary energy supply adequacy - %	Dietary energy supply	
AV5	Wheat import dependency ratio Ⓡ %	Import dependency	
AV6	Share of water resources used in agriculture out of total renewable water resources Ⓡ %	Agriculture water	6.4.2

- **The Access** dimension comprises five indicators reflecting the ability of the population to acquire needed food through financial means and/or socioeconomic strengths with determinants including income/revenues, prices and supply-chain infrastructure;

3 Food Access Indicators (AC)

Code	Indicator description	Short name	SDG linkage
AC1	Poverty headcount ratio (R) %	Poverty	1.1.1/1.2.1/1.2.2
AC2	Share of food consumption expenditure in total household consumption expenditure (R) %	Food consumption	
AC3	Unemployment rate (R) %	Unemployment	8.5.2
AC4	Logistics performance - index	Logistics	
AC5	Inflation, consumer prices (R) %	Inflation	

- **The Utilization** dimension comprises five indicators touching on nutrition impact or factors affecting it such as availability of basic water and sanitation infrastructure and critical health parameters showing the impact of food unavailability or nutrient deficiency, namely, stunting, wasting and anaemia;

4 Food Utilization Indicators (UT)

Code	Indicator description	Short name	SDG linkage
UT1	The population using at least basic drinking water services - %	Drinking water access	1.4.1/6.1.1
UT2	The population using at least basic sanitation services - %	Sanitation access	1.4.1/6.2.1
UT3	Children under 5 years of age affected by stunting (R) %	Child stunting	2.2.1
UT4	Children under 5 years of age affected by wasting (R) %	Child wasting	2.2.2
UT5	Anaemia among women of reproductive age (15-49 years) (R) %	Women anaemia	

- **The Stability** dimension comprises five indicators highlighting the variability in food production or supply factors that might affect these such as climate change, weather events, price shocks and sociopolitical conditions, all of which might impact the other food security dimensions and the core pillar as well;

5 Stability Indicators (ST)

Code	Indicator description	Short name	SDG linkage
ST1	Climate change vulnerability index (R)	Climate change	
ST2	Food price anomalies standard deviation (R)	Price anomalies	2.c.1
ST3	Political stability and absence of violence - ranking	Political stability	
ST4	Per capita food production variability - $1,000/capita (R)	Production variability	
ST5	Per capita food supply variability - kcal/capita/day (R)	Supply variability	

Data are collected and computed using a dedicated Excel template. The results are presented in the form of a dashboard with two overlapping doughnut charts whose ten rings represent the data normalized to score between 0 (worst performance) and 10 (best performance), as depicted in the graph below. The inner doughnut displays the results of the core indicators while the outer doughnut shows those of the four food security dimension indicators. During the normalization process, indicators with a low value indicating good performance were reversed and are represented with an (R). The doughnut chart is always accompanied by a table presenting the raw indicator data together with the year of data collection and the overall trend between two time periods.

By design, the framework is mechanistic for two reasons: (i) indicators are set and distributed across the food security core pillar and four dimensions; and (ii) the interpretation of results follows a determined path consisting, first, in evaluating results of the three core indicators to identify food security and/or nutritional outcome, and second, in examining the 21 dimension indicators to identify hotspot areas that need immediate action. Stakeholders only need to enter data into the provided Excel template to generate the doughnut graph and related table containing raw data and trends. The data can be sourced at the regional, national and, if available, sub-national levels and disaggregated along gender lines or others noting, however, that a great majority of indicators cannot be disaggregated below the national level.

A complete description of the framework, which was endorsed by the Executive Council of AOAD in March 2019, was published and is available at ESCWA official publication website[3] under the title "Tracking Food Security in the Arab Region".[4] In addition to providing a full background on the framework, the publication presents the key results of tracking food security at the Arab regional level and the trend over the considered years and reviews selected policies and actions that might be considered under each of the indicators to remedy arising concerns. The publication is accompanied by a technical document entitled "Manual for Monitoring Food Security in the Arab Region", which provides a more detailed description for each of the 24 indicators comprising the monitoring framework including, when applicable, computation methodology, justification for selection, linkage to SDGs, potential data sources, and normalization process. It also overviews the use of the accompanying Excel template. Since the completion of the Food Security Monitoring Framework, numerous national agricultural and statistics experts from Arab countries have received in-depth training that took place in Tunis[5] and Beirut[6] and which focused on how to utilize the framework and interpret results for maximum impact for policy and programme design and development.

This report provides a series of food security overviews for the 22 Arab countries, which build on the above-described Arab Food Security Monitoring Framework. Its aim is to further highlight how to use the framework as well as to build capacity on its use with a focus on the national level. As such, it supports Arab countries in their endeavours to utilize the framework in the implementation of food security programmes, to assess the prevailing situation and

3 See https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/publications/files/tracking-food-security-arab-region-english_1.pdf.

4 See https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/publications/files/manual-monitoring-food-security-arab-region-english_1.pdf.

5 See https://www.unescwa.org/events/training1-food-security-monitoring-framework-arab.

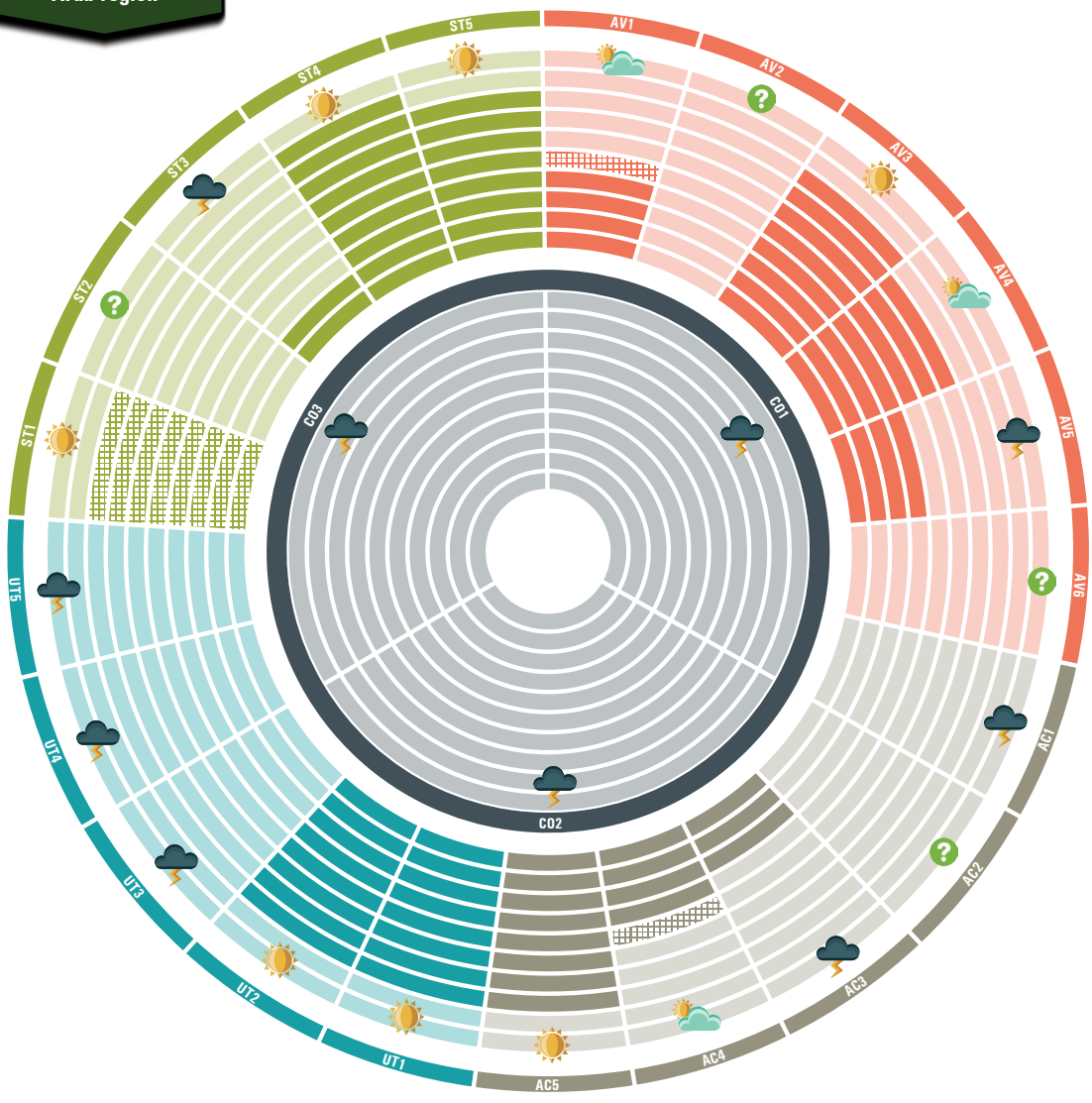
6 See https://www.unescwa.org/events/training2-food-security-monitoring-framework-arab.

to follow up on progress achieved towards the implementation of selected SDGs. It should further enhance capacity at country level and support efforts of national experts to collect focused data, analyse them using a dedicated framework and interpret meaningfully the results to provide policymakers with an overall view of their respective country's food security situation while also outlining alternative paths to address the situation.

The country overviews were produced by ESCWA with data delivered by national experts who provided or reviewed the underlying data (see attached list) and from global databases, as appropriate. For some countries, critical data are still missing, which should serve as a call to action to collect and provide the necessary data as the basis of more accurate and focused advice. The data were collected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic; thus, some results might not reflect the current situation. It is hoped that the report will raise the necessary awareness so that countries can make additional efforts to remediate the lack of data.

Food security dashboard

Arab region



2010 Data: Latest Data:

Performance: High: Proceed Action | Average: More Action | Low: Urgent Action | No Data

Food security indicators, world vs. Arab region

Indicators		World		Arab region			
		Latest		2010	Latest		Trend
Code	Description	Value	Year	Value	Value	Year	
CORE INDICATORS							
CO1	Undernourishment (R) %	10.8	2016	11.5	12.1	2016	🟡
CO2	Food insecurity (R) %	9.2	2018	n.a.	12.2	2016	
CO3	Obesity (R) %	13.0	2016	24.6	28.4	2016	🔴
AVAILABILITY INDICATORS							
AV1	Wheat yields - %	n.a.		76.5	82.2	2017	🟢
AV2	Agriculture expenditure - index	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		
AV3	Food loss (R) %	n.a.		7.3	6.8	2013	🟢
AV4	Dietary energy supply - %	n.a.		131	131	2017	🟡
AV5	Wheat Import dependency (R) %	n.a.		62.5	65.0	2012	🟡
AV6	Agriculture water (R) %	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		
ACCESS INDICATORS							
AC1	Poverty (R) %	26.2	2015	n.a.	16.6	mult.	
AC2	Food consumption (R) %	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		
AC3	Unemployment (R) %	5.0	2018	9.6	10.4	mult.	🔴
AC4	Logistics - index	2.8	2016	2.6	2.7	2016	🟢
AC5	Inflation (R) %	2.5	2018	5.7	12.8	mult.	🔴
UTILIZATION INDICATORS							
UT1	Drinking water access - %	88.5	2015	84.3	86.9	2015	🟡
UT2	Sanitation access - %	68.0	2015	78.9	80.8	2015	🟡
UT3	Child stunting (R) %	22.2	2017	n.a.	22.9	mult.	
UT4	Child wasting (R) %	7.5	2017	n.a.	8.7	mult.	
UT5	Women anaemia (R) %	32.8	2016	34.2	35.5	2016	🟡
STABILITY INDICATORS							
ST1	Climate change (R) - index	n.a.		n.a.	0.1	2019	
ST2	Price Anomalies (R) - index	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		
ST3	Political stability - ranking	n.a.		20	14	2017	🔴
ST4	Production variability (R) - $1,000/capita	n.a.		10.3	10.1	2016	🟡
ST5	Supply variability (R) - kcal/cap/day	n.a.		32.8	29.8	2013	🟢

(R): Reversed During Normalization n.a.= Not Available mult.= Multiple years

🔴 Red: Negative Trend 🟡 Yellow: Neutral Trend 🟢 Green: Positive Trend

Source: Computed by ESCWA.

Country background

A. Natural resources

Located on the north-eastern tip of the African continent, Somalia spans over 637,660 km^2. The country is drought-prone and regularly experiences severe occurrences (once every seven to nine years), which can cause major famine. The fertile lands are located along the only two rivers of Somalia, which are the Juba and the Shebelle.[1] Arable land is limited and accounts for less than 2 per cent of the area, while 70 per cent of the land is in permanent pasture. The mean annual rainfall is 280 mm, but it can reach 500 mm in the dryland.

Box 1. Somalia always teetering on the brink of famine

Famine is a constant threat in Somalia. The year 2019 saw some of the lowest cereal harvests in Southern Somalia and a significant decline in yields of cereals in the north, reaching up to 40 per cent according to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET).

These poor harvests are compounded by the fact that many Somalis have not yet recovered from the near-famine that was caused by the 2016-2017 drought, and the largest impact is on the estimated 2.6 million internally displaced people who are already in levels 3 (crisis) or 4 (emergency) of food insecurity of the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC). It is estimated that up to 2.1 million Somalis could be experiencing IPC 3 by December 2019, a 40 per cent increase since the beginning of 2019.

Moreover, floods from above-average rains in the current season are expected to damage crops in the fluvial plains across the country. As every year, humanitarian assistance is critically needed.

Source: FAO Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS), 2019.

B. Socioeconomy

Of its estimated 12 million people, 55 per cent are still rural, the majority of who are still mobile pastoralists or agro-pastoralists, living in poverty and vulnerable to droughts.

1 Janzen, J. H. A. and I. M. Lewis, 2019.

The nominal gross domestic product (GDP) in 2018 was $8 billion and the per capita GDP was $716. The economy is essentially based on agriculture, which makes up 40-75 per cent of GDP and 50 per cent of exports earnings, mainly as livestock sales to Saudi Arabia.[2] It employs 70 per cent of the labour force. Unemployment figures are high and reach up to 75 per cent for women. Somalia is a rapidly urbanizing nation with nearly 50 per cent of the population under the age of 14. Poverty rates are high and have been estimated at 70 per cent.[3]

It is estimated that 2.6 million Somalis are internally displaced, 80 per cent of whom are in urban areas. Progress is still hindered by a multitude of interacting factors including droughts, floods, civil conflict, external military and political interference, and profound inequality of class and gender.

C. Agriculture and food security

Somalia has a history of devastating famines, the most recent of which was the 2010-2012 famine, which was followed by a food crisis in 2014 and a near famine in 2016-2017, which was only averted because of an early warning system and intensified humanitarian assistance.

Food insecurity is always looming and is caused by complex, interacting drivers. Approximately 1.1 million people are food insecure.[4] At the household level, crop failures and livestock losses are compounded with conflict, displacement, political and economic instability, and inequalities. Food insecurity is more frequent and intense among internally displaced persons (IDPs) and in specific regions of the country. Women are the most affected segment of society. Malnutrition, especially in infants and children, is driven by food insecurity and by sociocultural factors related to gender inequalities.

2 World Bank, n. d.
3 World Food Programme (WFP), 2018.
4 Riddell, Hugh, 2020.

Data and trends

A. Core indicators

- **Prevalence of undernourishment (CO1)** data are not available;
- **Prevalence of severe food insecurity (CO2)** data are not available;
- **Prevalence of adult obesity (CO3)** was reported by official sources at 8.3 per cent in 2016, an increase from 6.4 per cent in 2010. Obesity in Somalia is one of the lowest in the region, although female obesity, at 12.3 per cent, is almost four times the rate of male obesity, at 3.9 per cent.[5]

B. Availability

- **Wheat yield to potential (AV1)** data are not available;
- **Agriculture orientation index (AV2)** data are not available;
- **Food losses to food available (AV3)** data are not available;
- **Average dietary energy supply adequacy (AV4)** remains below 100 per cent, after having slightly increased between 2010 and 2017 from 81 to 87 per cent. This implies that a significant portion of the population is not receiving an adequate supply of energy from food;
- **Wheat import dependency (AV5)** data are not available;
- **Water resources used in agriculture (AV6)** data are not available, but the country's total renewable water resources (997.1 m^3/capita/year) is slightly under the water scarcity threshold of 1,000 m^3/capita/year.[6]

C. Access

- **Poverty ratio at $3.2/day (AC1)** data are not available;
- **Food consumption share of expenditures (AC2)** data are not available;

5 World Bank, n.d.
6 Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (n. d.).

- **Unemployment rate (AC3)** did not change much between 2010 and 2016 as it remained between 14.6 and 14 per cent according to official sources. Male unemployment was recorded at 13.8 per cent in 2016, whereas female unemployment registered at 15.7 per cent, as reported by international sources;[7]
- **Logistics performance (AC4)** recorded a shy improvement from 1.3 in 2010 to 1.8 in 2016 but remains well under standard meaning that the food supply chain might be heavily affected;
- **Inflation, consumer prices (AC5)** data are not available.

D. Utilization

- **Population using basic drinking water services (UT1)** reached only 40 per cent of the population in 2015, compared to 33.4 per cent in 2010. The country is unlikely to meet the related target of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 by 2030;
- **Population using basic sanitation services (UT2)** reached 16.2 per cent in 2015, compared to 18.5 per cent in 2010. These values are alarming as a large number of nutrition-related diseases is associated with inadequate access to clean water and sanitation services;
- **Stunting in children under five years (UT3)** data are not available;
- **Wasting in children under five years (UT4)** data are not available;
- **Prevalence of anaemia among women (UT5)** is extremely high, at around 44 per cent in both 2010 and 2016, which are among the highest levels in the region and well above the regional average of 35.5 per cent. They are also very far from the target set for 2030 by the World Health Assembly (WHA).[8]

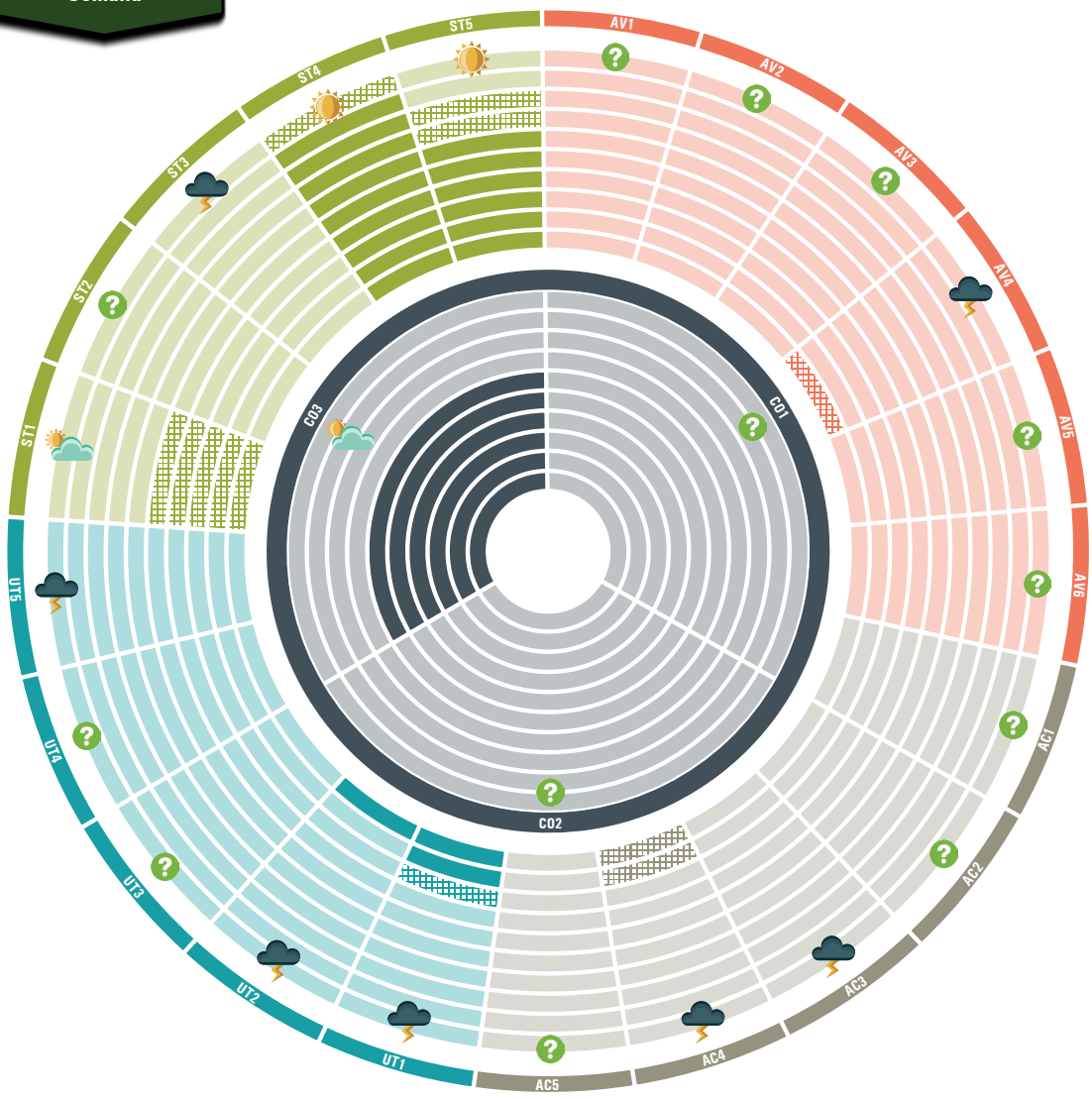
E. Stability

- **Climate change vulnerability (ST1)** index is at 0.24, indicating the possibility that the country could suffer from increase in weather-related disasters, sea-level rise and/or loss of agricultural productivity;
- **Food price anomalies (ST2)** data are not available;
- **Political stability (ST3)** ranking rose from 0 in 2010 to about 3 in 2017. Although an improvement, this score still indicates many hurdles hindering the stability of safe access to, and availability of, food;
- **Food production variability (ST4)** dropped from $7,800 to $3,800 between 2010 and 2016.[9] This implies a larger stability of food production across time;
- **Food supply variability (ST5)** also decreased from 55 kcal/capita/day in 2010 to 29 kcal/capita/day in 2013. Although a favourable decrease, these values remain very high, especially considering the country's extremely low average dietary energy supply adequacy.

7 World Bank, n. d.
8 Food and Agriculture Organization and others, 2019.
9 Constant 2004-2006 International USD.

Food security dashboard

Somalia



2010 Data: Latest Data:

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Food security indicators, Somalia

Indicators		Arab		Somalia			
		Latest		2010	Latest		Trend
Code	Description	Value	Year	Value	Value	Year	
CORE INDICATORS							
CO1	Undernourishment (R) %	12.1	2016	n.a.	n.a.		
CO2	Food insecurity (R) %	12.2	2016	n.a.	n.a.		
CO3	Obesity (R) %	28.4	2016	6.4	8.3	2016	🔴
AVAILABILITY INDICATORS							
AV1	Wheat yields - %	82.2	2017	n.a.	n.a.		
AV2	Agriculture expenditure - index	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		
AV3	Food loss (R) %	6.8	2013	n.a.	n.a.		
AV4	Dietary energy supply - %	131	2017	81	87	2017	🟢
AV5	Wheat Import dependency (R) %	65.0	2012	n.a.	n.a.		
AV6	Agriculture water (R) %	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		
ACCESS INDICATORS							
AC1	Poverty (R) %	16.6	mult.	n.a.	n.a.		
AC2	Food consumption (R) %	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		
AC3	Unemployment (R) %	10.4	mult.	14.6	14.0	2016	🟡
AC4	Logistics - index	2.7	2016	1.3	1.8	2016	🟢
AC5	Inflation (R) %	12.8	mult.	n.a.	n.a.		
UTILIZATION INDICATORS							
UT1	Drinking water access - %	86.9	2015	33.4	40.0	2015	🟢
UT2	Sanitation access - %	80.8	2015	18.5	16.2	2015	🔴
UT3	Child stunting (R) %	22.9	mult.	n.a.	n.a.		
UT4	Child wasting (R) %	8.7	mult.	n.a.	n.a.		
UT5	Women anaemia (R) %	35.5	2016	43.9	44.4	2016	🟡
STABILITY INDICATORS							
ST1	Climate change (R) - index	0.1	2019	n.a.	0.24	2019	
ST2	Price Anomalies (R) - index	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.		
ST3	Political stability - ranking	14	2017	0	3	2017	🟢
ST4	Production variability (R) - $1,000/capita	10.1	2016	7.8	3.8	2016	🟢
ST5	Supply variability (R) - kcal/cap/day	29.8	2013	55.0	29.0	2013	🟢

(R): Reversed During Normalization n.a.= Not Available mult.= Multiple years

🔴 Red: Negative Trend 🟡 Yellow: Neutral Trend 🟢 Green: Positive Trend

Note: Unless otherwise indicated, all data figuring in this table and framework were received from national sources.

Food security snapshot

A. Drivers and determinants

Although many indicators lack data, the food security monitoring framework shows that food security is a major challenge for Somalia. Undernourishment (CO1) and food insecurity (CO2) lack data while obesity (CO3) levels are good but require close monitoring.

Hotspot areas include the following:

- **Availability:** Average dietary energy supply adequacy (AV4) and water resources used in agriculture (AV6);
- **Access:** unemployment (AC3) and logistics (AC4);
- **Utilization:** access to water services (UT1), access to sanitation services (UT2) and anaemia among women (UT5);
- **Stability:** political stability (ST3).

The evaluation of the monitoring framework for Somalia unveils some of its main limitations, which is its applicability for countries in protracted conflict and crisis where data collection, evaluation and policymaking do not operate as in stable countries. For the specific case of Somalia, some data are available, but is not accessible through the databases the framework relies upon. It is located within humanitarian assistance organizations, and sometimes uses different measurements from those relied upon for the framework data. This applies to information related to food insecurity, which uses the IPC classification rather than the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES).

Moreover, regional differences are very wide, especially in countries experiencing civil conflict and which are de facto divided, or where logistics and communications are poor and regional exchanges of goods and merchandise is impeded by political and physical barriers. It is, therefore, recommended to assess food security at the regional level, although the current format of the framework does not lend itself easily to this endeavour.

B. Action areas

Our analysis using the framework data and complementary observations allow us to identify the following areas that can be strengthened by policy and action:

1. Humanitarian aid in the form of in-kind and cash-based transfer will remain necessary for the foreseeable future, especially in drought-prone regions and in vulnerable groups;

2. The livelihoods of pastoralists and agropastoralists must be made a priority. They must be enhanced through direct support in supplementary feeding, veterinary care and access to water;

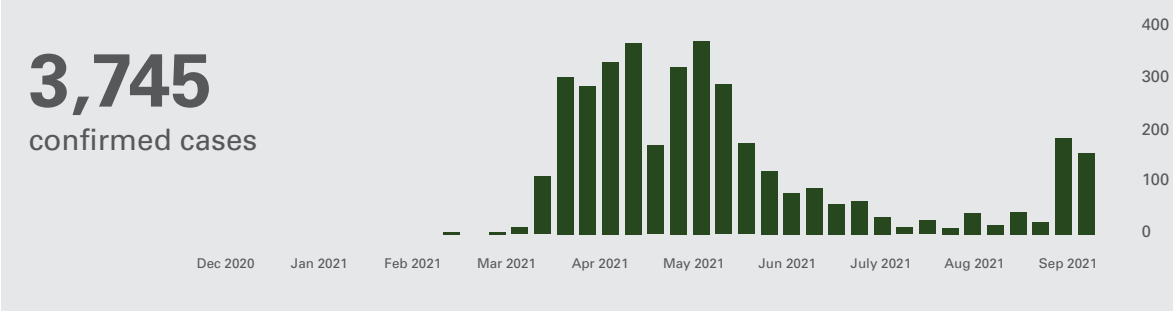
3. Similarly, small farmers must be supported through livelihood-enhancing activities that conserve the environment and enhance diversification;

4. Particular attention should be given to women and children as they are the most vulnerable. Nutrient imbalances and micronutrient deficiencies must be addressed through a country-wide nutritional support programme.

Impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic reached Somalia in mid-March 2020 and by October had affected more than 3,700 people with close to 100 deaths recorded. In general, Somalia records less than 100 daily occurrences of COVID-19, and the bulk of cases occurred between mid-April and mid-July. Following a lull during the month of August 2020, cases seem to be on the rise again with a substantial spike on September 27 of 123 cases.

Weekly cases



Source: World Health Organization (WHO), n. d.

Due to the restrictive measures, including suspension of international flights and the closure of educational institutions, implemented to control the pandemic, the number of food-insecure people increased to 2.7 million between April and June and further increased to 3.5 million between June and September.[10] It is predicted to further increase to 4.15 million, aggravate acute food insecurity and push one in every six children (1 million) into severe malnourishment (Riddell, 2020), with the presence of other factors such as decreased rainfall during the rainy season (deyr) from October to December subsequent to below-average rainfalls during the rainy season (gu) between March and June, which affect the 2020 and 2021 planting and harvesting seasons.[11]

10 FAO Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS), 2020; United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 2020; and Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET), 2019.
11 FEWSNET, 2020; and Riddell, 2020.

Short rainfalls, coupled with crop losses and decreased agricultural work salaries, will drive areas that depend on pastoralism into IPC phase 3 in the early months of 2021.[12] The most vulnerable people are the poor residing in urban areas, agrarians, pastoralists, and IDPs who depend solely on food and livelihood aid.

In southern pastoral areas, food security is advancing (IPC phases 1 and 2) where pasture is available for livestock and camels, and milk is available for sale and consumption.

Import restrictions impacted the availability of food notably in the northern and central parts of Somalia. Compared to one year earlier, July's import of rice was lower by 54 per cent, wheat flour by 10 per cent and sugar by 22 per cent.[13] This led to an increase in the price of these food commodities reaching as high as 53 per cent above average in regions such as Galgaduud in the centre and Togdheer in the north of Somalia. The decision to halt the hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia due to the pandemic affected the livestock sector considerably and led to a decrease of exports to Saudi Arabia (mainly from the north-western region) by 50 per cent; trade with Kenya was also halted due to the closure of the livestock market in Garissa in north-eastern Kenya. In connection with a decreased local demand due to the closure of local restaurants, prices of goats decreased, remaining marginally average though. These affected the terms of trade of goat-to-rice[14] especially in north-west Somalia, which also exports to Saudi Arabia, where the value of one goat decreased to 67 kg, compared to 70 kg in the central regions.[15]

Camel milk was also heavily impacted as its demand decreased, resulting in lower prices, at a time when camel milk was at its highest seasonal availability in terms of quantity and quality.[16] With restrictions on exports, decreased remittances and increased livestock transportation costs, the income and the purchasing power of pastoralists were negatively impacted, increasing their food insecurity.[17]

At the beginning of the growing season, locust invasions affected 180,000 hectares of rangeland adding a threat to local production that used to feed less than a quarter of the population. Floods and restrictive COVID-19 measures prevented the FAO from reaching all pastoralists for livestock vaccination campaigns.[18] Floods damaged roads linking rural and urban areas, which led to increased prices of fresh foods such as bananas, onions or tomatoes.[19]

12 FEWSNET, 2020.
13 Ibid.
14 Goat-to-rice terms of trade range between 57 and 85 kg of rice per goat.
15 FEWSNET, 2020.
16 Mercy Corps, 2020.
17 Food Security and Nutrition Working Group (FSNWG), 2020.
18 FAO, 2020.
19 Horn Observer, 2020.

Box 2. Examples of initiatives

Government-led

In April 2020, the Government of Somalia announced tax exemptions on imported rice and dates and a 50 per cent tax discount on imported wheat flour and vegetable oil.[a]

Other initiatives

The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSRelief), in collaboration with Al-Musbah Development Association, supported 7,200 individuals in Somalia by distributing 1,200 Ramadan food baskets.[b]

World Vision Somalia improved access to water through water trucking to internally displaced people.[c]

A total of 279 humanitarian organizations provided food aid for some 700,000 people, 2.3 million people, and 1.8 million people in April, May and June 2020, respectively.[d]

In May, the Somalia Food Security Cluster and the WASH Cluster distributed one-month food parcels to 2,000 households and trucked water with hygiene kits to 700 households covering 18 regions in Somalia.[e]

Thirty-one per cent of the United Nations' Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) was allocated to the Food Security Cluster to alleviate the impacts of the pandemic, locust invasion and flooding on food security of the vulnerable residents in Somaliland, Puntland and Banadir. Aid was provided in the form of unconditional cash transfers, cattle vaccination and locust control measures.[f]

The global humanitarian team Mercy Corps connected small and medium livestock traders with buyers serving export abattoirs and Ethiopia's market.[g]

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a FAO Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS), 2020.
b Arab News, 2020.
c World Vision, 2020.
d United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), (2020).
e Ibid.
f Ibid.
g Ibid.

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