inputs, inflating transport and production costs. Prices of other cereals, including teff, wheat and white sorghum were up to 40 percent above their year-earlier levels in Addis Ababa by October (FAO-GIEWS, December 2019). Although prices of livestock increased through 2019 in the southern Somali region due to lower supplies, staple food prices increased at faster rates. The deterioration of terms of trade created severe food access constraints for pastoralist households, at a time when they were trying to repopulate their herds and had few animals to sell (FAO-GIEWS, December 2019).

High youth unemployment (64 percent of the population is under 25) was identified by the Government as a key contributor to political fragility and increased migration (internationally and rural to urban) (OCHA, January 2020). As a result of sluggish export performance and a foreign exchange crunch purchases of food for humanitarian relief were constrained (OCHA, January 2020).

Nutrition status of refugees

Refugee nutrition was concerning in the 21 camps assessed by the 2019 SENS: 33 percent of camps had GAM rates above the ‘very high’ threshold, while 48 percent had ‘high’ levels. In over 60 percent of camps child anemia levels were of ‘high’ public health significance. Nursing mothers may stop breastfeeding due to psychological distress and insufficient access to food and water. Unsolicited donations of breast milk substitutes and milk products risked adequate young child feeding (IYCF) practices (OCHA, January 2020).

Although stunting decreased significantly among children under 5 from 58 percent in 2000 to 36.8 percent in 2019, it is still classified as ‘very high’ (DHS, 2000–2019). In Afar, Amhara and Tigray regions stunting levels exceeded 40 percent, and only 7.3 percent of children received a minimum acceptable diet (OCHA, January 2020).

Food insecurity along with water shortages, poor sanitation facilities and lack of access to quality healthcare contributed to deteriorating child nutrition. Nationally sanitation coverage was only 57 percent – in other words more than 45 million people lack access to improved sanitation (IFRC, July 2019). As of 8 December 2019 and since the beginning of the outbreak in April 2019, 2 089 cases of cholera had been reported (ECDC, December 2019). There were 9 672 cases of measles in Amhara, Afar, Oromiya and Somali and five cases of vaccine-derived polio reported in 2019 (WHO, December 2019).

NUTRITION OVERVIEW

Nationally acute malnutrition rates are classified as ‘medium’ at 7.2 percent (Ministry of Finance and UNICEF, October 2019). Almost 1 million children have severe acute malnutrition annually (EmDHS, 2019). Malnutrition rates are highest in rural, hard-to-reach areas where people face difficulties and/or discriminations in accessing health and nutrition services and among pastoralist populations (OCHA, January 2020).