NUTRITION OVERVIEW

About 1.3 million boys, girls, pregnant and lactating women suffer from acute malnutrition, with 180,000 children under 5 years suffering from life-threatening severe malnutrition (OCHA, January 2020).

The 2019 post-Gu season nutrition assessment, conducted in June–July, showed a similar median GAM estimate (14 percent) to that of 2018 (13.8 percent), and a non-statistically significant decrease when compared to Gu 2017 (17.4 percent) (FSNAU/FEWS NET, September 2019).

The percentage of children with SAM was 2.3 percent – up from 2 percent in Gu 2018, but better than 3.2 percent in Gu 2017, which was an exceptionally difficult year characterized by severe drought in some parts of the country, particularly in the central south regions, leading to high levels of acute malnutrition. In Gu 2019 the average SAM rate was higher in rural areas (3 percent) compared to urban (2.1 percent). For IDPs the mean estimates were higher at 18 percent for GAM and 3.5 percent for SAM (FSNAU/FEWS NET, September 2019).

In the post-Deyr assessment conducted in November 2019, preliminary results of surveys conducted among IDPs and urban populations indicated a GAM prevalence of 13.1 percent, reflecting a slight increase since the 2018 Deyr (11.7 percent) and 2019 Gu (12.9 percent) for these populations. Furthermore, the acute malnutrition situation in 4 out of the 22 IDP or urban population groups surveyed showed ‘very high’ levels with GAM above 15 percent, in Mogadishu, Galkayo, Boosaaso and Baidoa. This may reflect widening food consumption gaps, in light of low income and declining humanitarian food assistance levels in some settlements, as well as increased morbidity. In November, morbidity among children was high (≥20 percent) in 13 out of 22 population groups surveyed, with five IDP settlements showing a prevalence above 30 percent (FSNAU/FEWS NET, February 2020).

A publication analysing data from 2007–2016 showed that IDP households were consistently more likely to suffer from malnutrition and morbidity than non-displaced populations (Martin-Canavate et al, 2020). In the post-Gu analysis, the average GAM rate for IDPs was 18 percent and the SAM rate was 3.5 percent (FSNAU/FEWS NET, September 2019).

The 2019 floods raised the risk of AWD/cholera outbreaks especially in central-south Somalia. Episodes of prolonged diarrhoea are also associated with increased morbidity and mortality from other diseases, adverse neuro-development and growth stunting. The incidence of measles in this period was also very high. According to joint WHO and Somalia Federal Ministry of Health reports, nearly 1,257 measles cases were reported from January–August 2019, keeping the outbreak at epidemic levels. In the same period, 1,909 cases of AWD/cholera were reported, an increase of 48 percent since June–August 2018 (FSNAU/FEWS NET, October 2019).