Agricultural livelihoods and food security in the context of COVID-19
Somalia Monitoring Report
Methodology

- Household survey (FAO beneficiaries and random digit dialing) and key informant interviews with extension officers of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and agrodealers
- 18 regions of Somalia included: 110 HH per region; 2,464 respondents (1,213 female, 1,251 male)
- Regions grouped into livelihood zones for analysis
- Duration of the data collection – approximately one month (August-September 2020)
- Remote data collection using phone calls, conducted by Geopoll

Funded by: USAID
Most cropping HHs indicated that they were engaged in either planting or land preparations.

12% were currently harvesting which, based on seasonality, were likely off-season Gu harvests.
COVID-19 in the Context of Multiple Hazards

- Somalia is currently facing the worst Desert Locust invasion in 25 years
- **Conflict/instability** plague the country, disrupting livelihoods and driving population displacements (193 000 people displaced by conflict in 2020)
- **Flash floods** caused population displacements and damage to property, infrastructure, and crops. March-May: 546 000 people affected, 217 000 displaced; June-Sep: 633 000 affected, 43 000 displaced.

Source: FAO
Agricultural Production

- 46% of HHs reported crop production as one of their two main income sources.
- 82% of cropping respondents faced unusual difficulties, most commonly dry spells and pests/diseases, followed by difficulties accessing fertilizers and pesticides, hail/storms/strong winds, heavy rains/floods, and labour being too expensive/HH lacked income to hire labour.
- Majority of those involved in off season Gu production expected harvests to be below average, with 20% reporting much lower to no production.
Area Planted and Seed Access

- 52% of HHs reported difficulties in accessing seeds
- Challenges included: unavailable from vendors or local markets, household incomes being insufficient to buy seeds, and higher seed prices than usual
- 48% HHs indicated that they would be either reducing their area planted to less than half of usual levels or would be unable to plant this season at all.

Seed Access Difficulties

- Southern Agropastoral: 54% facing difficulties, 20% no need, 23% current access
- Bay Bakool Agropastoral: 30% facing difficulties, 1% no need, 68% current access
- Northwestern Agropastoral: 50% facing difficulties, 17% no need, 31% current access
Crop Sales

- Amongst households who indicated cropping as their main livelihood activity, the majority indicated that the level of their sales were reduced compared to last year.

- 79% of respondents indicated that they were forced to give away or destroy part of their production due to a lack of marketing and storage capacity during the past three months.

- 69% faced difficulties selling their crops.

Marketing challenges for crops:

- Prices too low
- Lower demand than usual
- Higher costs of transportation
- Constrained market access
- Usual traders not coming to buy produce anymore.
Livestock

- 70% of livestock-rearing HHs indicated that they faced difficulties during past 3 months.

- In the southern agropastoral and northcentral pastoral zones, accessing veterinary services was most important challenge, while constrained water access was the most important challenge for northern pastoral and northwestern agropastoral zones.

- Lack of income was the most common reason for difficulties accessing veterinary services, veterinary inputs, and feed access.

- Mixed performance of the Deyr rains to date.

Source: USGS
Challenges facing sale of livestock/livestock products

- The majority indicated that the level of their sales were reduced over the past three months compared to the same time last year.
- 59% of livestock-rearing households indicated unusual challenges selling their livestock production during the past three months.

- Prices too low
- Higher cost of transportation compared to usual
- Lower demand than usual
- Usual traders not coming to buy production anymore
- Constrained market access
Local cereal prices

Price of red sorghum compared to 2019

Livelihood-based zones used for analysis
- Southern agropastoral
- Bay Bakool agropastoral
- Northcentral pastoral
- Northern pastoral
- Northwestern agropastoral

Sept 2020 price of red sorghum compared to last year's levels:
- Down by >30%
- 30% to -10%
- -10% to +10%
- +10 to +30%
- More than 30%

Price of red sorghum in Baidoa

Source: FAO : Source of data: FSNAU/FEWS NET

Source: FAO : Source of data: FSNAU/FEWS NET
Imported rice prices

Price of parboiled rice compared to 2019

Source: FAO : Source of data: FSNAU/FEWS NET

Price of parboiled rice at Garowe

Source: FAO : Source of data: FSNAU/FEWS NET
Livestock prices

Price of goats in key markets compared to 2019

Price of cattle in key markets compared to 2019

Source: FAO : Source of data: FSNAU/FEWS NET

Source: FAO : Source of data: FSNAU/FEWS NET
Livestock exports

Historical livestock export levels (heads of animals) from Berbera port

Historical livestock export levels (heads of animals) from Bossaso port

Source: FSNAU
Livestock exports

Source: FSNAU
Most (73 percent) of the interviewed households reported that their overall income from their main income sources has decreased during the past 3 months.
HH Incomes

The highest percentage of HH reporting a decrease in their income was observed amongst households involved in nonfarm activities, suggesting that HH involved in agriculture were slightly less exposed to COVID-19 related income shocks in comparison to those involved in nonfarm activities.
Remittances

- Only 3% of respondents indicated that remittances were one of their top two income sources.

- According to FSNAU-Somalia, up to 15 percent of urban and IDP households in 11 assessed areas said they received external remittances between April and June, with the exception of urban households in Hargeisa (28 percent) and Beletwneye (18 percent).

- Urban households were more likely to receive remittances and to receive higher amounts than IDP households.

- Urban and IDP household reported a 10-30 percent decline in the amount that they typically receive.
Coping strategies

The graph shows the distribution of coping strategies across different zones. The strategies include:

- Sold Households Goods
- Sold More Animals
- Sold Production Assets
- Eat Planting Seeds
- Migrate Household
- High Risk Job
- Adults Begging
- Children Begging

The graph indicates the percentage of households using each strategy in the Southern agropastoral zone, Bay Bakool agropastoral zone, Northcentral pastoral zone, Northern pastoral zone, and Northwest agropastoral zone.
## Priority Needs

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Southern agropastoral</th>
<th>Bay Bakool Agropastoral</th>
<th>Northcentral Pastoral</th>
<th>Northern pastoral</th>
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<td>2 Pesticides</td>
<td>3 Animal feed</td>
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<td>3 Info on COVID safety measures for ag work</td>
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1 = high priority; 2 = medium priority; 3 = low priority
Conclusions

• Cropping households (HHs) experienced below-average Gu harvests, and many indicated that they were planning to plant a reduced land area for the Deyr. In addition to climatic shocks, challenges included a lack of income to hire labour and buy seeds and fertilizer, as well as marketing difficulties.

• Pastoral HHs benefited from above-average Gu rainfall. Livestock-rearing respondents indicated challenges relating to marketing and accessing veterinary services, feed, pasture and water.

• Most HHs reported that their incomes had decreased during the past 3 months with HHs involved in non-farm activities being more likely to report declines.

• COVID-19 did not have major impacts on the price of locally produced staples, though a brief increase in imported rice prices in April and May was observed. Impacts of COVID-19 on livestock exports was less than previously anticipated with relatively stable exports and above-average livestock prices.
Recommendations

- Populations in IPC Phase 3+ require urgent action to prevent food consumption gaps and acute malnutrition. Populations in IPC Phase 2+ require livelihood support programs. HHs indicated a strong preference for cash.

- Programs that build resilience, improve food availability and stabilize access are required. This could include activities that enhance access to agricultural and livestock assets and advisory services. Attention should also be given to post-harvest technologies and developing local feed and farming input supply modalities.

- Support programs to populations who abandoned agriculture because of conflict or the 2016/17 drought but are interested in re-entering the sector now should be provided.

- Awareness raising should be undertaken to ensure that food supply chain actors are not at risk of COVID-19 transmission. Revised modalities for agricultural extension and protocols to comply with hygiene/safety measures during planting, harvesting, and selling need to be implemented. Sanitary and phytosanitary measures in the downstream value chain should also be intensified.

- Strengthened EW systems are needed to inform anticipatory actions. Close monitoring of the current Deyr, as well as upcoming Gu seasonal forecasts, is also needed.
Questions?