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SOMALIA

Shocks, agricultural livelihoods and food security

Monitoring report
November 2021



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Abbreviations and acronyms

COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FIES	Food Insecurity Experience Scale
FSNAU	Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit
GIEWS	Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture
HDDS	Household Dietary Diversity Score
ICPAC	IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

Key highlights

- > The main shocks reported by interviewed households included dry spells, high food prices, sickness or death of household members, loss of income, pests and diseases affecting both crops and livestock, and high fuel prices.
- > Somalia's food-security situation remains dire, with 3.5 million people expected to face high levels of acute food insecurity through the end of 2021. In addition, 1.2 million children under 5 are likely to be acutely malnourished, including nearly 213 400 who are likely to be severely malnourished by July 2022.
- > Poor rains have resulted in lower-than-average *Gu* crop yields in the south and poor harvest prospects in north-west agro-pastoral livelihood zones (Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit [FSNAU] and Famine Early Warning Systems Network [FEWS NET], 2021). More than half of crop-producing households reported decreased production during the *Gu* season compared to a typical year.
- > Drought continues to ravage the country. After two failed growing seasons due to pasture and water shortages, drought is likely to persist through the *Deyr* (rainy) season, which lasts from October to December (FAO, 2021a; Intergovernmental Panel on Development – Climate Prediction and Application Center [ICPAC], 2021a; ICPAC, 2021b).
- > Conflict and insecurity remain prominent: 574 000 displacements occurred in 2021 alone, of which 413 000 were due to conflict, aggravating preexisting vulnerabilities (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2021a).
- > Difficulties reported by crop-producing households included inadequate water for irrigation, plant pests and diseases, lack of insecticides, low seed quality, crop loss and damage and lack of farm inputs including seeds, fertilizer and equipment.
- > Difficulties with crop sales included: low farm-gate prices; reduced demand; high marketing costs induced by increased transportation costs; crop damage and loss (due to flooding and withering); and difficulty processing produce.

- > Livestock production challenges included: constrained access to pasture and water, pests and diseases, limited access to veterinary services; high cost of feed; a lack of market access and conflict or insecurity.
- > Livestock-producing households reported low prices for their production, reduced demand, difficulties accessing slaughterhouses and high marketing costs. Reduced prices can be attributed to emaciated livestock as a result of inadequate pasture and water resources (FAO, 2021a).
- > Among fishing households, 31 percent reported decreased production compared to the previous year. The most frequently reported challenges included restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, difficulties accessing fishing inputs and labour, challenges finding fish and high fuel prices.
- > Household Dietary Diversity Scores indicated that 22 percent of households had consumed 5–12 food groups in the previous 24 hours, 44 percent had consumed 3–4 food groups and 34 percent had consumed 0–2 food groups.
- > In the 30 days preceding the survey, 19 percent of respondents employed Stress-level coping strategies, 45 percent engaged in Crisis-level coping strategies and 24 percent resorted to Emergency-level coping strategies.
- > Based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES), 47 percent of respondents experienced moderate or severe food insecurity, and 17 percent experienced severe food insecurity. According to Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) thresholds for the FIES, 34 percent had scores in line with Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or Emergency (IPC Phase 4) levels of food insecurity.
- > Ninety-four percent of respondents expressed the need for assistance. Major needs included inputs, veterinary services, water for irrigation, cash, assistance with livestock production, marketing support, storage facilities, land access and rehabilitation, and information on how to minimize COVID-19 infections.

Methodology

With financial support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) leads the establishment of a data and analysis facility in the context of the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and other shocks. The objective of the facility is to improve decision making in support of the food security and livelihoods of all actors in key agricultural, livestock and fisheries value chains in high-priority food-crisis countries, with a focus on producers.

Data collection for the household survey took place from 26 July to 17 August 2021. Computer-assisted telephone interviews were used to conduct the survey through a service provider, Geopoll. The respondent sample was drawn from the previous rounds of data collection in late 2020 and early 2021. Additional respondents were contacted through random digit dialling to reach the targeted sample size.

The sample included 2 739 households, with an initial target of 160 agricultural households in 17 regions. Banadir was excluded since it is mainly urban. Respondents comprised 1 810 men and 922 women. By weighting the sample, the household survey was statistically representative at the regional level with a 90 percent confidence interval and a 10 percent margin of error. No respondents were dropped from the data analysis.

Interviewed respondents included pastoralists (45 percent), agro-pastoralists (25 percent), crop producers (24 percent) and those engaged in non-agricultural activities (6 percent). The assessment also included key informant interviews with 50 crop, livestock and fisheries extension officers, 55 agricultural input vendors and 49 food traders.

Shocks and risk factors in the country

According to respondents, the most-frequently reported shocks affecting households' capacity to access food and income in the three months preceding the survey were: sickness or death of household members; high food prices; dry spells and drought; high fuel prices; crop pests and diseases; livestock pests and diseases; and loss of employment.

The April– June 2021 *Gu* (rainy) season was marked by a late start, early end and irregular rainfall distribution. As a result, cumulative rainfall in much of the country – especially central and southern Somalia – was below the 40-year average. The poor 2021 *Gu* was the second consecutive season of below-normal rainfall for much of the country. This, coupled by a warmer-than-normal *Jilaal* (dry) season resulted in the further deterioration of rangelands and water resources, driving poor crop harvest prospects and reducing livestock production.

According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), as of August 2021, nearly 40 000 Somalis were facing mild-to-moderate drought conditions. Puntland, Galmudug, South West and Jubaland states, and Banadir region were also facing moderate-to-severe water shortages (OCHA, 2021). Moderate-to-severe drought conditions are expected to persist as the October-to-December *Deyr* season is projected to be below average, especially in southern Somalia (IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre [ICPAC], 2021a; ICPAC, 2021b).

Despite drought conditions in many areas, flooding was reported in riverine livelihood zones along the Shabelle and Juba rivers, affecting farmland, destroying crops and displacing local populations – leading to significant crop and income losses (Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit [FSNAU] and Famine Early Warning Systems Network [FEWS NET], 2021).

At the time of data collection, a few immature desert locust swarms were present in northwest Somalia and more have recently been spotted in the northeast due to arrivals from northwest Somalia and undetected local breeding. This might also impact agriculture and livestock production in affected areas (FAO, 2021c).

Although there were more than 21 269 reported cases of COVID-19 and 1 180 deaths, only about 1 percent of Somalia's population had been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as of the end of August 2021 (World Health Organization [WHO], 2021; Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [OCHA], 2021). When asked about the impact of COVID-19-related measures on agricultural activities in the previous three months, households reported market closures, movement restrictions (which delayed the transport of goods to markets), bans on social gatherings and international border closures.

The majority of extension officers stated that although the COVID-19 pandemic had disrupted their work, they were able to adjust and carry out their tasks. Most agricultural input vendors reported that they were not affected by COVID-19-related restrictions and

continued with business as usual. Food traders indicated that there had been no change in the quantity of food supplies, but the frequency with which they received supplies was lower than usual due to decreased imports. Some food traders also reported difficulties hiring labour because their financial situation was affected by the pandemic.

Conflict also continues to ravage many parts of the country. As of August 2021, 2.95 million people in Somalia were displaced by conflict and natural disasters, with 574 000 displacements occurring in 2021 alone. Of these displacements, 413 000 were the result of conflict (UNHCR, 2021b).

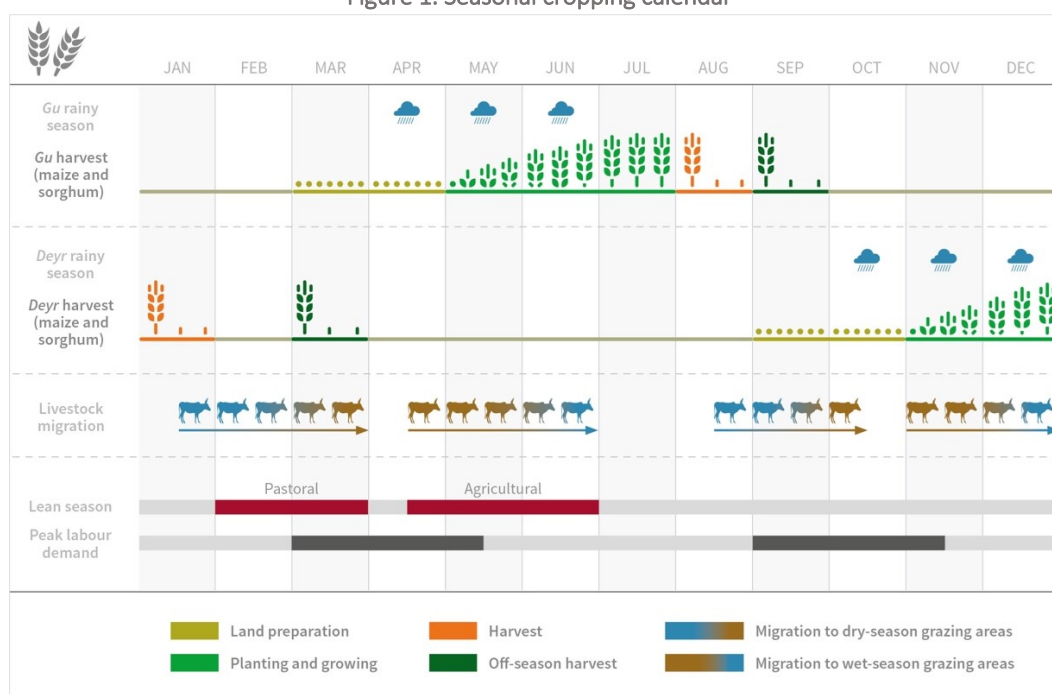
Agricultural production

Somalia has primarily a bimodal agricultural system with two agricultural seasons: the *Gu* season is characterized by rains between April and June, and the *Deyr* season is rainy between October and December. The *Jilaal* is characterized by warm, sunny and dry weather from December to mid-March. The cool, dry and cloudy *Haggai* season starts in July and lasts until mid-September (FAO, 2021b).

Crops

Data were collected for this assessment in August 2021, during the *Gu* cereal harvest.

Figure 1. Seasonal cropping calendar



Source: FEWS NET, 2021; FAO, 2021d.

The main crops cultivated during the *Gu* season are maize, millet, sorghum, wheat, and beans. While 47 percent of interviewed households reported that crop production was one of their two main income sources in the previous three months, just 24 percent indicated that crop production was their primary livelihood. The percentage of households growing crops was much higher than the national average in the south and agro-pastoral regions of Lower and Middle Shabelle, Middle Juba, Hiraan, Bay, Lower Juba, and somewhat higher in Waqooyi Galbeed.

Among crop producers, 34 percent reported engaging in rainfed farming. This common farming system in Somalia is usually subsistence oriented. The primary rainfed crops are sorghum, cowpea, and maize. The second most common farming system according to this assessment was canal irrigation, as reported by 31 percent of households. Of these respondents, 16 percent used pumps while 15 percent reported manual irrigation.

Irrigation agriculture was most common in Lower and Upper Shabelle, Lower and Upper Juba, Hiraan, Gedo and Bakool.

Difficulties with crop production

Crop-production difficulties were reported by 44 percent of crop-producing households in the three months prior to the survey:

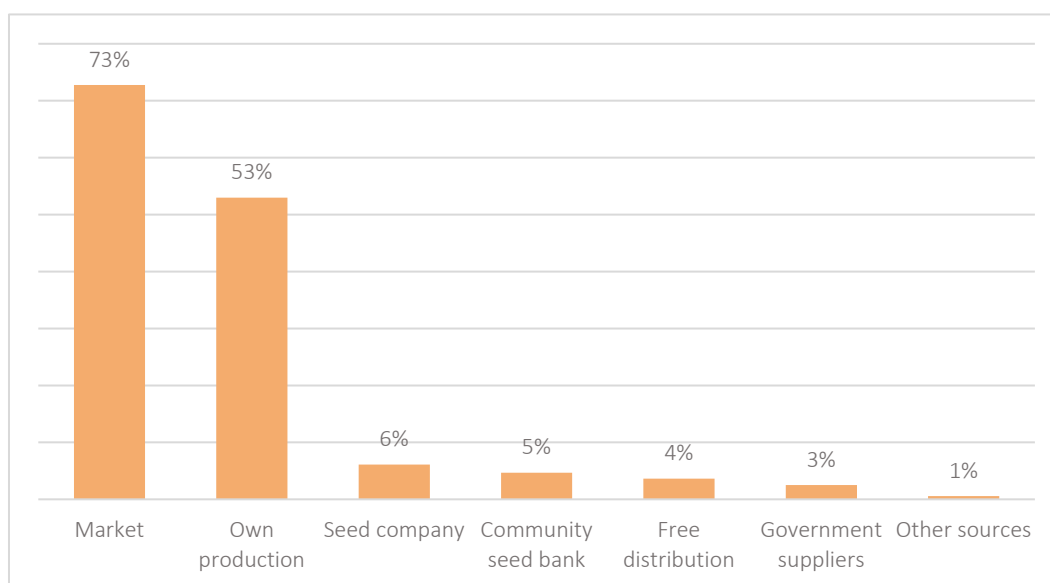
- *Inadequate irrigation water supply*: This difficulty was cited primarily by crop-producing households in Awdal, Mudug, Sanaag, Togdheer, and Bakool regions. It could be due to two consecutive below-average rainfall seasons, which had a negative impact on crop output in late 2020 and early 2021.
- *Inaccessibility of insecticides*: A greater proportion of households in Middle Juba, Sool, Nugaal, Bay, and Bari reported experiencing this difficulty than in other regions.
- *Plant disease*: Bari, Lower Juba, Gedo, Waqooyi Galbeed, and Togdheer had greater percentages of households reporting plant disease-related difficulties.
- *Low seed quality*: Mudug, Galgaduud, and Lower Shabelle had higher proportions of households reporting seed-quality issues than other regions.
- *Inaccessibility of fertilizer*: One reason why farmers were unable to obtain these critical inputs could be that suppliers are increasingly requiring up-front cash payment. Farmers who were financially strapped were therefore unable to obtain inputs. A significant number of input traders indicated that they were extending credit at a lower rate than normal, especially in Mudug and Togdheer.
- *Crop loss or damage during the growing season (locust, fall armyworm, dry spells, disasters other than plant disease)*: Lower Shabelle, Togdheer, Sanaag, and Bakool had a relatively greater proportion of households reporting this as a challenge than other areas. Crop losses and decreased income from agriculture were also attributed to dry spells and an early cessation of the *Gu* rainy season.

The majority of extension officers reported that there were more shocks affecting crop output this *Gu* season than normal, particularly in Awdal, Bay, Gedo, Hiraan, Lower Juba, Lower Shabelle, Middle Shebelle, Sanaag, Togdheer, and Waqooyi Galbeed. Prevalent shocks included dry spells and drought, desert locust, crop diseases other crop pests (including fall armyworm).

Although 73 percent of farmers purchased seed in the *Gu* season, 53 percent utilized seeds from their own production. Other farmers accessed seeds from seed companies (6 percent), community seed banks (5 percent), free distribution from donors (4 percent) and government supplies (3 percent) (Figure 2).

The majority of extension officers indicated that farmers were experiencing seed-access challenges. Agricultural input venders reported an increase in the number of customers obtaining seeds on credit. They also indicated that there were no government-imposed COVID-19 restrictions in their areas of their operations, but that they had experienced transport challenges along with shortages of seeds, fertilizers and veterinary inputs.

Figure 2. Sources of seed during the *Gu* season (percentage of crop-producing households)



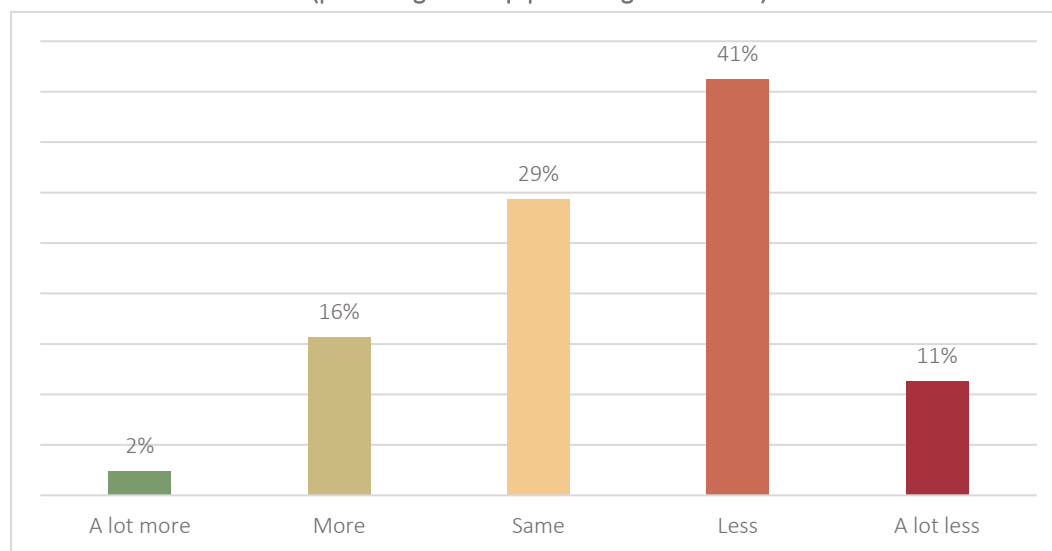
Source: FAO, 2021; FAO assessment results, August 2021.

According to 50 percent of respondents, the area planted in the *Gu* season was smaller compared to a typical year within the last five years. In contrast, 24 percent of farmers reported that their area planted had increased, while 26 percent cited no change. This finding was confirmed by most extension officers. In addition, 56 percent of crop-producing households indicated that they could only cultivate between 1 and 5 ha while 27 percent could only cultivate less than 1 ha. Only 15 percent of households could cultivate over 5 ha.

In southern and central Somalia, an erratic temporal distribution of *Gu* rains, including a late start to the season and mid-season heavy rains, curtailed planting, lowered yields and caused crop losses. Agricultural activities were also disrupted by an escalation of the conflict that began in 2021 (FAO, 2021c). Moreover, as low river water levels hampered irrigation efforts, dry weather damaged rainfed as well as irrigated crops near the Juba and Shabelle rivers. Poor and irregular seasonal rains resulted in less area planted and lower yields in the major maize-producing Lower Shabelle, the Bay Region's sorghum belt and the Middle Shabelle, Galgadud, and Mudug regions.

FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture (GIEWS) indicated that Somalia experienced below-average cereal output during the *Gu* season (FSNAU and FEWS NET, 2021). There were also indicators of below-average *Gu* crop production in southern Somalia, and poor crop harvest prospects in agro-pastoral livelihood zones in the Northwest. According to 53 percent of respondents, crop harvests were reduced in the *Gu* season compared to a typical year (18 percent reported an increase while 29 percent reported no change) (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Change in harvest in *Gu* season compared to a typical year
(percentage of crop-producing households)



Source: FAO, 2021; FAO assessment results, August 2021.

Livestock

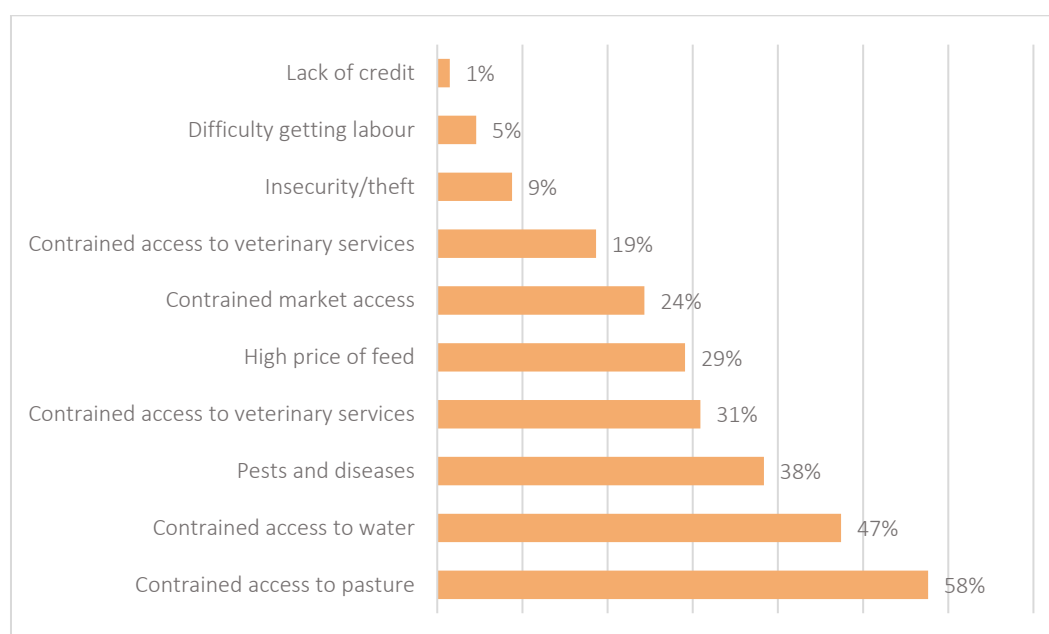
Among all respondents, 45 percent identified livestock rearing was identified as their exclusive agricultural activity. This assessment was conducted at the peak of calving for cattle and camels. Among those who engage in livestock rearing, 43 percent stated that livestock and livestock-product sales was their primary source of income, while 13 percent indicated that it was a secondary source of income. Galgaduud, Bari, Awdal, Nugaal, Bakool, Togdheer, Mudug, Gedo and Sanaag had higher percentages of households reporting livestock production as their major agricultural activity than Lower Shabelle, Middle Shabelle, Hiiraan and Lower Juba.

Livestock reared by respondents include goats, cattle, camels, sheep and poultry. The most important livestock products, according to extension officers, are meat, milk, ghee and skin and hides.

The assessment showed that 94 percent of households in Somalia utilize open pasture to feed their livestock. Herding households also utilize fodder (7 percent), feed (6 percent) and community-managed pastures (5 percent).

Half of livestock-producing households indicated difficulties rearing animals in the previous three months. The main challenges indicated were constrained access to pasture and water, pests and diseases, constrained access to veterinary services, high cost of feed, constrained market access and constrained access to veterinary services (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Difficulties experienced by livestock producers in the previous three months
(percentage of livestock-producing households)



Source: FAO, 2021; FAO assessment results, August 2021.

The main shocks identified by extension officers included limited access to pasture, difficulties accessing veterinary inputs, livestock theft, limited access to livestock markets, livestock disease and low prices for livestock and livestock products. Livestock diseases – reported most often in Awdal, Bari, Galgadud, Gedo, Hiraan, Lower Juba, Middle Shebelle, Mudug, Sanaag, and Waqooyi Galbeed regions – include contagious caprine pleuropneumonia, haemorrhagic septicaemia, foot and mouth disease, sheep and goat pox, and camel pox.

Drought-induced livestock diseases, abortions and deaths were reported in Waqooyi, Galbeed and Sanaag regions in the north, Mudug and Galgaduud regions in central Somalia, and Hiraan and Gedo in the south. In these areas, many herders that were unable to provide their animals with adequate feed and water opted to cull the newborn calves in order to save the milk-producing females. This is in line with reports from GIEWS indicating that livestock births and milk production were reduced due to ongoing dry spells, resulting in widespread livestock emaciation (FAO, 2021d).

Among livestock-rearing households 60 percent reported experiencing market closures, which they associated with COVID 19 pandemic. Other households linked the pandemic to a loss of other income sources, inadequate veterinary resources, rising food and transportation costs, sickness of household members and resource-based conflict.

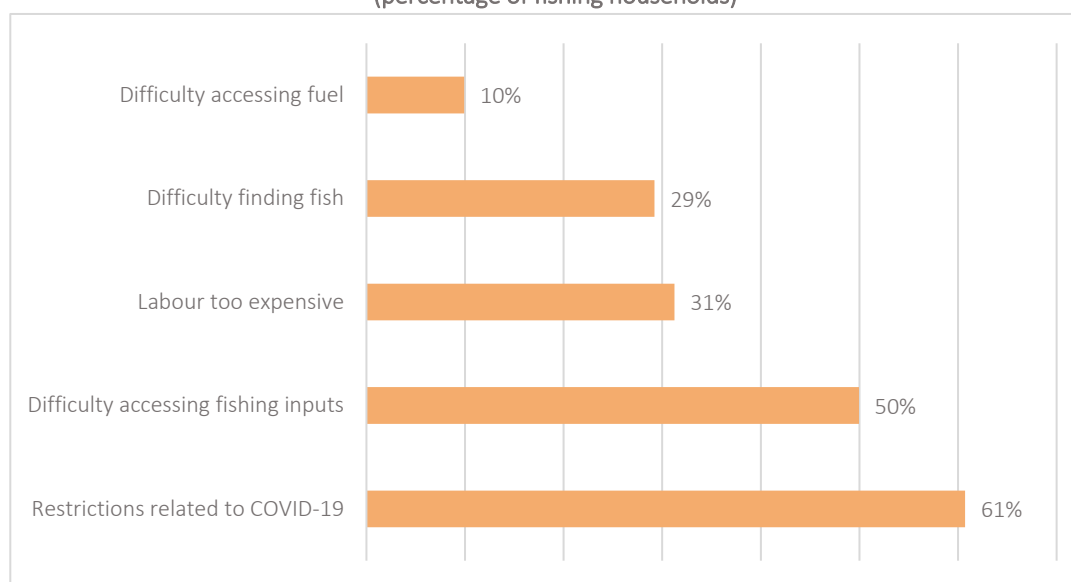
Fisheries

For many pastoralists and other people in rural areas, fishing is a seasonal part-time activity that supplements household diets and income. During the months with the strongest south-west monsoon winds, fishing completely stops throughout most of Somalia's Indian Ocean coastline, and many coastal people return to pastoralism (World Bank and FAO, 2018).

Coastal fishing is practiced by 95 percent of interviewed households who reported engaging in any type of fisheries-related activity; most coastal fishing takes place in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. Other households practice open-sea fishing (3 percent), fishing in rivers and lakes (2 percent) and aquaculture (1 percent).

Difficulties in fish production in the three months preceding the survey were reported by 26 percent of fishing households. These included restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, difficulties accessing fishing inputs, expensive labour, difficulties finding fish and challenges accessing fuel (Figure 5). Inputs that households had the most difficulties accessing were fishing gear, nets, boat repairs, bait and ice.

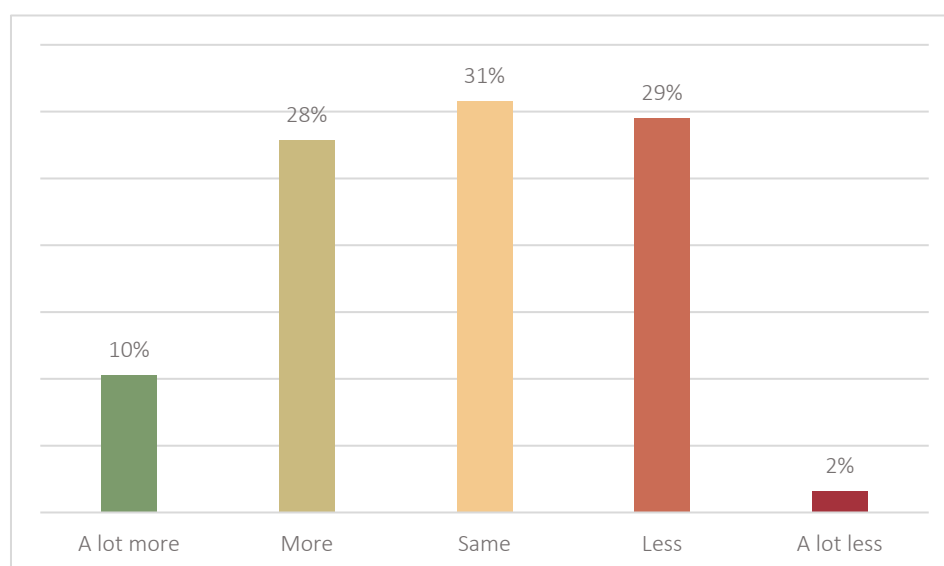
Figure 5. Fishing production difficulties
(percentage of fishing households)



Source: FAO, 2021; FAO assessment results, August 2021.

Compared to the previous year, 38 percent of fishing respondents indicated reduced fish production in the three months prior to the survey; 31 percent of households reported an increase; and the other 31 percent indicated that their production had not changed (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Fish production in the previous three months compared the same period
in the previous year (percentage of fishing households)



Source: FAO, 2021; FAO assessment results, August 2021.

Food supply and markets

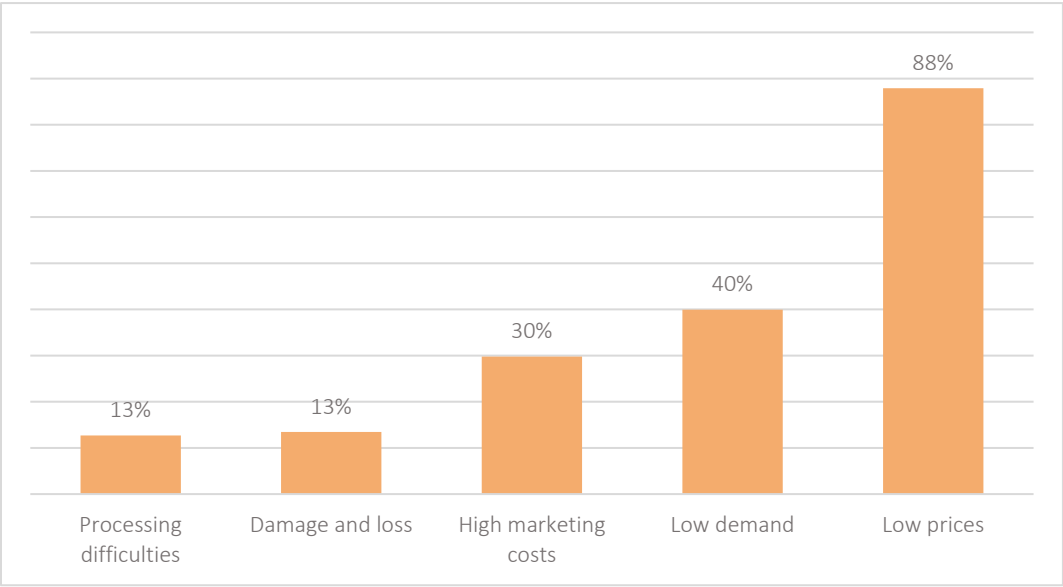
Markets play an important role in Somalia’s economy, affecting both food and livelihood security. Pastoralists, agro-pastoralists and agriculturalists all rely on rural markets for food and income. For example, pastoralists rely on the sale of livestock and animal products for 40–80 percent of their cash revenue, and 30–70 percent of their food needs (both locally grown produce and imported grain) (FSNAU and FEWS NET, 2021). Crop producers and agro-pastoralists rely on markets for the sale of their produce as well as for employment.

Crop marketing and prices

During the three months preceding the survey, 47 percent of households reported facing difficulties selling their main crop. Respondents in almost all regions complained of increased difficulties with crop sales, especially in Galgaduud, Nugaal, Lower Juba, Sanaag, Mudug, Togdheer, Middle Juba and Lower Shabelle.

The most commonly reported challenge was low farm-gate prices, cited by 88 percent of respondents. Other challenges with crop sales included reduced demand, high marketing costs induced by increased transportation costs, crop damage and loss (due to flooding and withering), and processing difficulties (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Crop sales difficulties (percentage of crop-producing households)



Source: FAO, 2021; FAO assessment results, August 2021.

Extension officers noted challenges and disruptions in the transportation of agricultural goods and food commodities in their areas, affecting crop marketing and the timely delivery of much-needed agricultural inputs. The market challenges they identified (in order of significance) included lower-than-normal demand for their products, greater transportation costs, lower product prices and limited storage capacity. In Sool, Togdheer, Lower Shabelle, Bakool, Bay, Galgaduud, Gedo, Mudug, Nugaal and Middle

Shabelle, agricultural marketing was reported as a particular problem for farming households.

All food traders indicated that they were able to operate their businesses as usual during the three months preceding the survey. However, they reported some challenges transporting food items. The majority cited a decrease in the quantity of imports and a decrease in the frequency of food supplies compared to the same period in 2020.

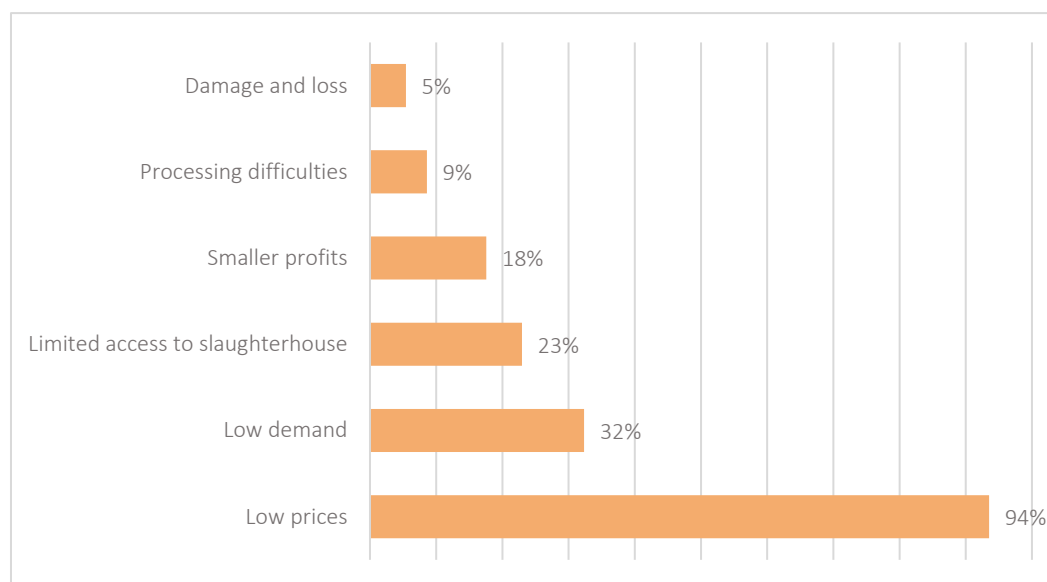
Livestock marketing and prices

The livestock sector is central to the economic and cultural lives of the Somali people. The country is one of the biggest exporters of livestock and livestock products to the Middle East – especially during *Ramadan* and the *Hajj*. In recent years, exports of animals – especially camels and cattle – from Somalia to Kenyan and Ethiopian markets have been increasing (World Bank and FAO, 2018).

From January to July 2021, nearly 256 147 heads of livestock were traded in Somalia – a 10 percent and 14 percent decline respectively compared to the same period in 2020 and the five-year average. This decline was attributed to COVID-19 movement restrictions (FSNAU and FEWS NET, 2021). Also in 2020, the Saudi government decided to suspend *Umrah* visits in 2020 and only allowed a limited number of people to attend the *Hajj* pilgrimage, thus reducing the demand for livestock (Mtimet et al., 2021).

In the three months leading up to the survey, livestock-producing respondent households were mainly engaged in the sale of goats, cattle, camel, and sheep. Among livestock producers, 49 percent reported difficulties in livestock sales in the previous three months. The most-reported difficulty was low prices (indicated by 94 percent of respondents), followed by low demand (32 percent). Other challenges included difficulty accessing slaughterhouses, low profits and difficulty processing livestock products (Figure 8). Extension officers also cited lower-than-usual livestock prices compared to same time last year. This can be attributed to poor livestock physical conditions as the drought continues to ravage the country.

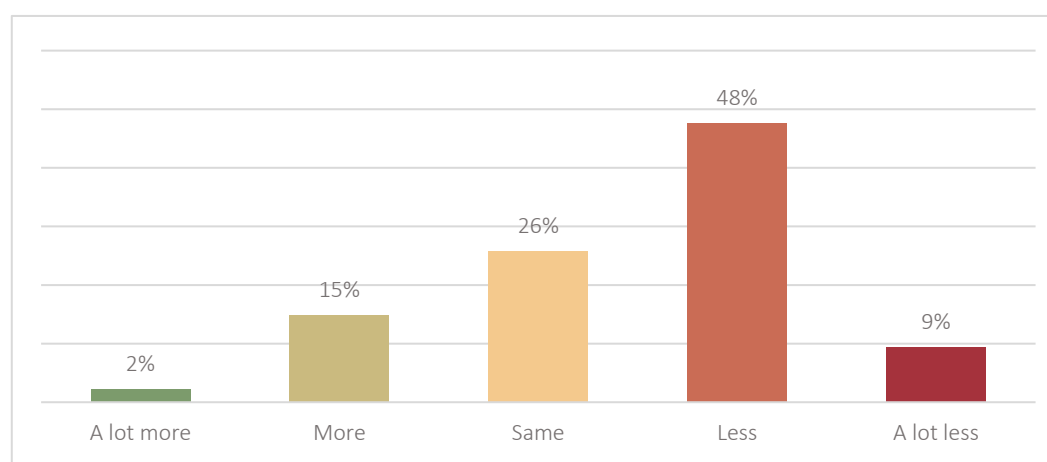
Figure 8. Difficulties experienced in the sale of livestock and livestock products
(percentage of livestock-producing households)



Source: FAO, 2021; FAO assessment results, August 2021.

While 57 percent of livestock-rearing households indicated that current prices for their animals were less than the three-year average for the same time period, 17 percent indicated an increase and 26 percent reported no change in prices (Figure 9).

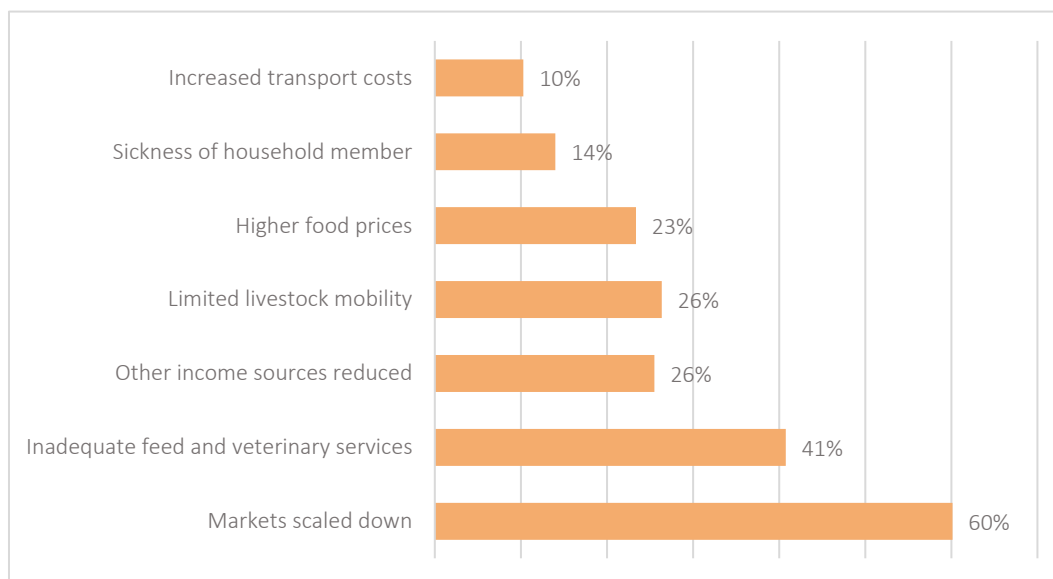
Figure 9. Changes in livestock prices in the past three months
(percentage of livestock-producing households)



Source: FAO, 2021; FAO assessment results, August 2021.

When respondents were asked how the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to livestock-sales difficulties: 60 percent responded that markets were shut or scaled down; 41 percent mentioned inadequate feed and veterinary services; 26 percent associated COVID-19 with limited livestock mobility; 26 percent attributed reduced income sources to the pandemic; and 23 percent cited rising food prices (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Links between livestock sales difficulties and the COVID-19 pandemic
(percentage of livestock-producing households)

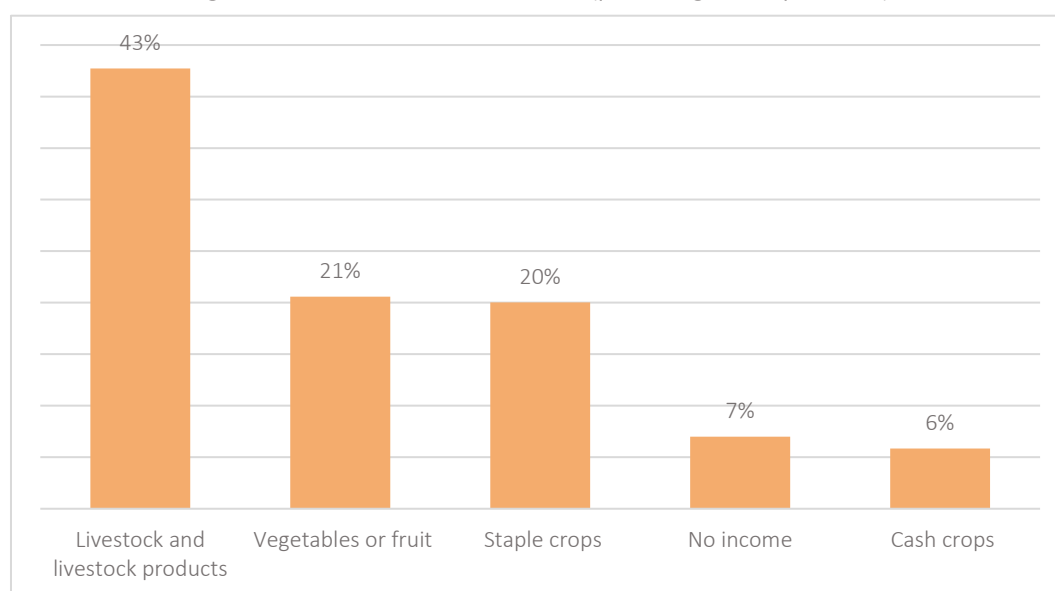


Source: FAO, 2021; FAO assessment results, August 2021.

Livelihoods, incomes and coping strategies

The main sources of income reported by the interviewed households in the three months preceding the survey included: production and sale of livestock and livestock products; crop production; and the sale of vegetables, fruits and cash crops. Some households reported not having any source of income in the three months prior to the survey (Figure 11).

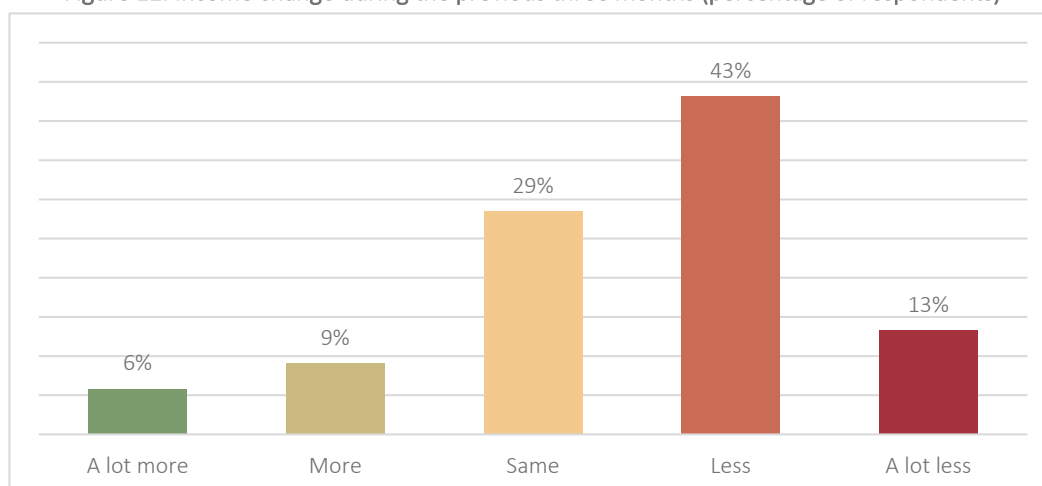
Figure 11. Most-cited income sources (percentage of respondents)



Source: FAO, 2021; FAO assessment results, August 2021.

Due to difficulties with crop and livestock production and sales, 56 percent of interviewed households recorded reduced income in the three months preceding the survey. Only 12 percent reported an increase in income (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Income change during the previous three months (percentage of respondents)



Source: FAO, 2021; FAO assessment results, August 2021.

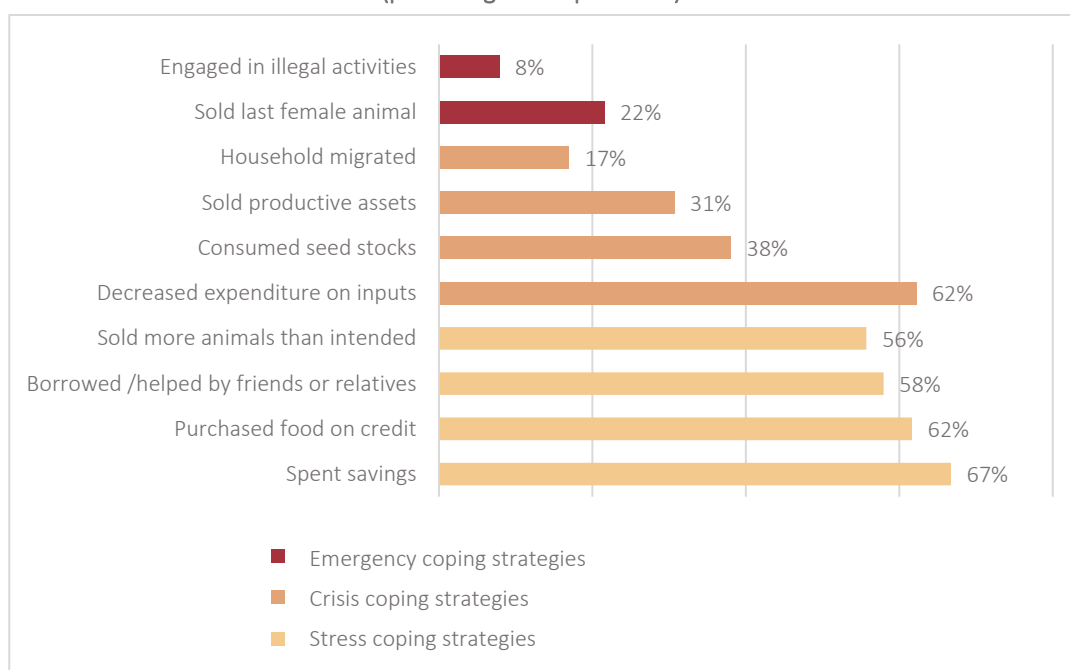
Food security

According to the most recent Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis for Somalia, 3.5 million people across the country are expected to face Crisis levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3) or higher through the end of 2021. In addition, 1.2 million children under 5 are likely to be acutely malnourished, including nearly 213 400 who are likely to be severely malnourished by July 2022 if humanitarian assistance is not delivered. The major drivers of acute food insecurity in Somalia are the combined effects of poor and irregular rainfall, floods and conflict (IPC, 2021a).

Livelihood-based coping strategies

The Livelihood-based Coping Strategy Index is used to identify coping strategies employed by households in the last 30 days due to a lack of food or money to buy food. Ten questions are selected from a master list of 18 to fit each area's context. In this sample, households most-frequently reported spending their savings, decreasing expenditures on inputs, purchasing food on credit, borrowing from friends or relatives, and selling more animals than intended (Figure 13).

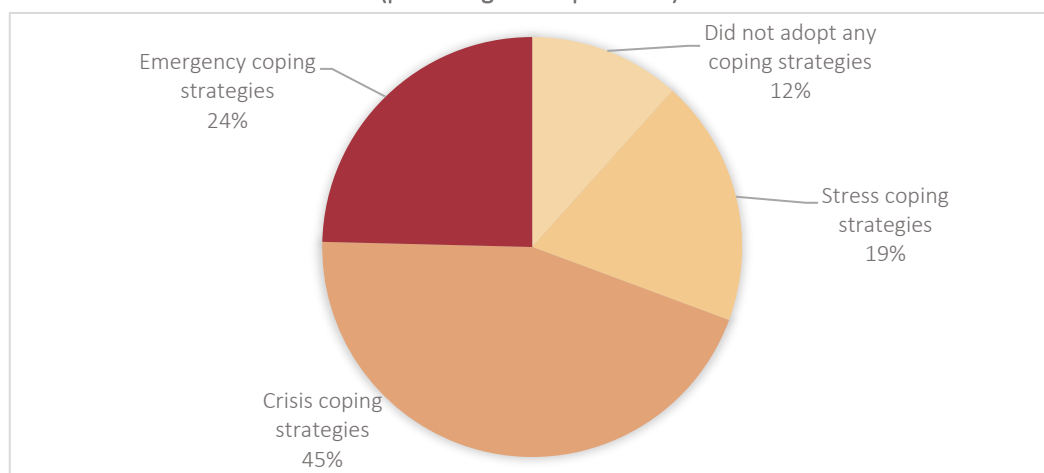
Figure 13. Livelihood-based coping strategies adopted by households
(percentage of respondents)



Source: FAO, 2021; FAO assessment results, August 2021.

In terms of livelihood coping strategies, 24 percent of respondents reported adopting Emergency-level strategies, 45 percent adopted Crisis-level strategies, 19 percent adopted Stress-level strategies and 12 percent of households did not employ any coping strategy to access food or income (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Livelihood coping strategies
(percentage of respondents)



Source: FAO, 2021; FAO assessment results, August 2021.

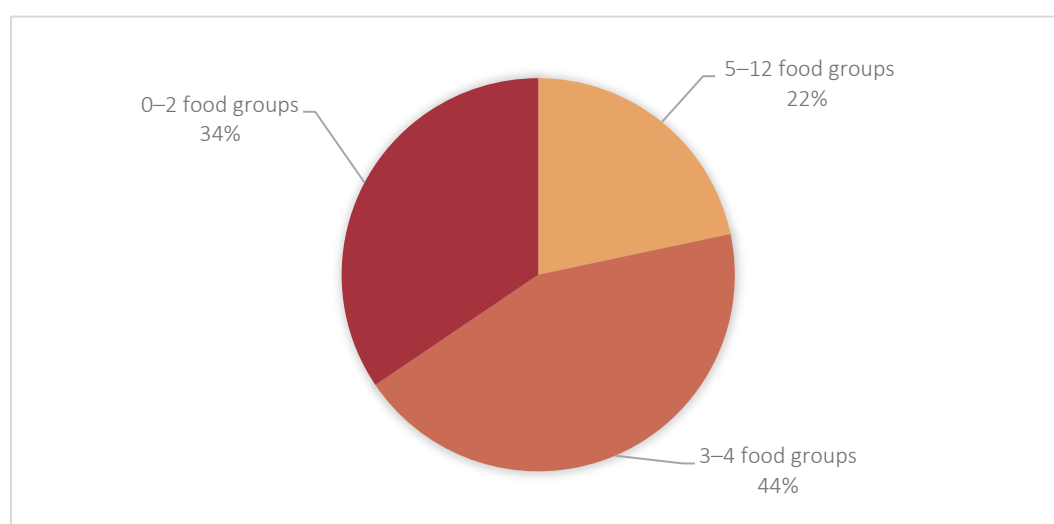
Household dietary diversity

The Household Dietary Diversity Score is a food-security indicator that reflects the diversity of household diets, and therefore food access. Used as a proxy for households' energy availability, it is calculated by counting the number of food groups (out of 12) that each household has consumed in the past 24 hours. The total number of food groups is categorized by the IPC reference table (IPC, 2021b):

- 5–12 food groups – IPC Phases 1 and 2;
- 3–4 food groups – IPC Phase 3; and
- 0–2 food groups – IPC Phases 4 and 5.

In the 24 hours prior to the survey: 22 percent of households had consumed 5–12 food groups, 44 percent had consumed 3–4 food groups; and 34 percent had consumed 0–2 food groups (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Household Dietary Diversity Scores (percentage of respondents)



Source: FAO, 2021; FAO assessment results, August 2021.

Food insecurity Experience Scale

The estimated prevalence of recent food insecurity in Somalia was based on a 30-day recall period. In addition to the standard eight questions from the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) on conditions and experiences typically associated with inability to access food, three supplemental questions elicited information on the frequency of these experiences during the last 30 days. The aim was to enable greater disaggregation of data on severe food insecurity, which could have important implications for humanitarian assistance.

The prevalence of recent food insecurity is reported based on two separate thresholds:

- Thresholds used to define moderate and severe food insecurity in the context of the global monitoring process for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG); and
- Thresholds as defined in the IPC acute food insecurity reference table for the 30-day reference period (IPC Phase 3 or higher) (IPC, 2021b).

As for the SDG threshold, the methodology for obtaining IPC-aligned threshold was focused on ensuring comparability across different contexts.

The table below presents the estimates of the prevalence of recent food insecurity for the total sample and at the regional level. Reported estimates include margins of error based on (90 percent) confidence intervals reflecting sampling and measurement errors.

Nearly half of the interviewed households (47 percent) experienced moderate or severe food insecurity, with 17 percent experiencing severe food insecurity (Table 1). People with moderate food insecurity typically eat low-quality diets and may be forced to reduce the amount they eat at certain times during the year, whereas those with severe food insecurity may go for entire days without eating due to a lack of money or other resources to obtain food.

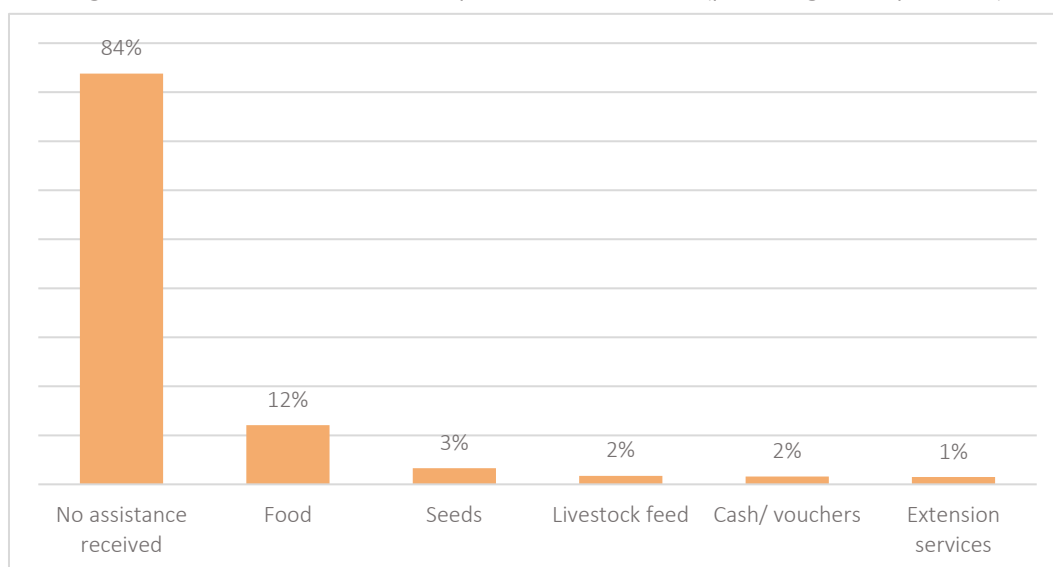
Table 1. Percentage of households affected by recent food insecurity,
(July and August 2021) in the entire sample and by region (based on FIES scores)

	Total	Recent food insecurity threshold		
		Moderate and severe	Severe only	IPC Phase 3 or higher
Total	2 732	47.1 (± 5.2)	17.5 (± 6.8)	33.6 (± 6.0)
Region				
Awdal	162	43.6 (±13.6)	17.1 (± 13.0)	31.3 (±14.3)
Bakool	160	45.2 (±11.9)	11.9 (± 6.0)	30.6 (±10.6)
Bari	160	37.1 (±11.0)	8.9 (± 5.6)	23.2 (± 9.2)
Bay	160	39.8 (±11.2)	11.4 (± 6.6)	25.9 (± 9.8)
Galgaduud	160	53.8 (±12.6)	15.9 (± 8.9)	35.6 (±12.1)
Gedo	160	49.6 (±12.0)	14.8 (± 7.0)	34.9 (±11.0)
Hiraan	164	47.4 (±12.5)	18.6 (± 9.1)	35.3 (±11.8)
Lower Juba	161	48.3 (±12.3)	14.7 (± 6.8)	34.2 (±11.1)
Lower Shabelle	167	59.9 (±26.6)	36.6 (± 38.8)	49.9 (±32.1)
Middle Juba	162	41.0 (±10.6)	7.2 (± 4.7)	23.7 (± 8.5)
Middle Shabelle	161	47.5 (±11.5)	20.6 (± 8.6)	35.9 (±10.8)
Mudug	160	42.3 (±12.2)	9.7 (± 5.8)	25.9 (±10.3)
Nugaal	160	47.4 (±11.2)	14.0 (± 6.6)	32.8 (±10.0)
Sanaag	158	47.8 (±10.9)	12.3 (± 6.4)	30.9 (± 9.9)
Sool	160	49.7 (±16.2)	18.8 (± 12.4)	35.2 (±15.9)
Togdheer	160	33.5 (±11.2)	10.7 (± 6.7)	23.0 (± 9.8)
Woqooyi Galbeed	157	51.5 (±13.7)	21.1 (± 11.1)	38.0 (±13.4)

Most affected population groups and needs

More than 80 percent of respondents indicated that they had not received any form of assistance in the three months preceding the survey. Of the 20 percent that reported receiving assistance, it came in the form of food, seeds, feed, cash, vouchers or extension services (Figure 16).

Figure 16. Assistance received in the previous three months (percentage of respondents)

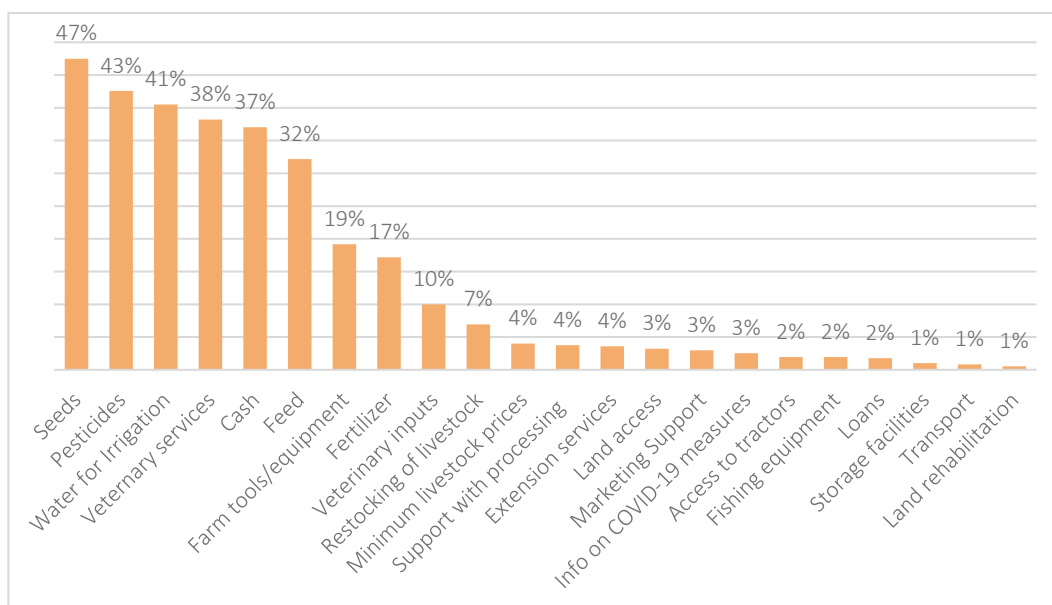


Source: FAO, 2021; FAO assessment results, August 2021.

Among all respondents, 94 percent indicated that they would require assistance for the next three to six months to boost their crop, livestock, and fisheries production. Their reported needs include (Figure 17):

- farm inputs such as seeds, pesticides, veterinary inputs, farm equipment, tractors, feed, fertilizer and fishing equipment;
- veterinary services;
- water for irrigation;
- cash;
- restocking of livestock and livestock price protections;
- marketing support;
- storage facilities;
- land access and rehabilitation; and
- information on how to minimize COVID-19 infection while carrying agricultural activities.

Figure 17. Household needs in the next three to six months (percentage of respondents)



Source: FAO, 2021; FAO assessment results, August 2021.

Conclusion

- The main shocks reported by interviewed households included dry spells, high food prices, sickness and death of household members, loss of income, crop and livestock pests and diseases, and high fuel prices.
- Rainfall during the April to June 2021 *Gu* season was lower than the 40-year average, notably in central and southern Somalia, due to a late start, an early end and erratic rainfall distribution. Southern Somalia's 2021 *Gu* crop yield was therefore below normal (FSNAU and FEWS NET, 2021). In the survey, 52 percent of crop-producing households reported decreased crop production during the *Gu* season compared to a typical year.
- Higher fuel prices have increased transportation costs, and therefore marketing costs for crop and livestock producers.
- More than half of livestock-rearing households reported lower prices for livestock. This can be attributed to deteriorating livestock conditions, caused by a shortage of pasture and water as dry spells persist.
- Household Dietary Diversity Scores indicated that 34 percent of respondent households had consumed 0–2 food groups in the 24 hours preceding the survey. Another 44 percent had consumed 3–4 food groups while 22 percent had consumed between 5 and 12 food groups out of 12.
- Emergency-level livelihood-based coping strategies were employed by 24 percent of respondents in 30 days preceding the survey. An additional 45 percent engaged in Crisis-level coping strategies while 19 percent employed Stress-level coping strategies.
- Based on FIES scores, 17 percent of interviewed households had experienced severe recent food insecurity while 47 percent experienced moderate or severe food insecurity. Based on the IPC thresholds for FIES, this is equivalent to approximately 34 percent of respondents experiencing Emergency or Crisis levels of food insecurity.
- A need for assistance in the next three to six months was expressed by 94 percent of households. The main reported needs include farm inputs (seeds, pesticides, veterinary inputs, farm equipment, tractors, feed, fertilizer and fishing equipment), veterinary services, water for irrigation, cash, livestock restocking, livestock price protection, marketing support, storage facilities, land access and rehabilitation, and information on minimizing COVID-19 infection.

Recommendations

- Scale up food-assistance and livelihood-support programmes to protect the lives of vulnerable households affected by the drought. Livelihood-support programmes could include: (i) providing humanitarian assistance to protect livestock and the livelihoods of livestock-rearing households, including feed and water; (ii) supporting livestock off-take programmes that involve destocking emaciated livestock to boost household incomes and prevent deterioration and death of animals; (iii) scaling up livestock vaccination programmes and veterinary services for livestock-rearing households to curb pests and diseases; and (iv) supporting farmers with farm inputs including high-quality pest-and-disease resistant, and climate-resilient seeds.
- Implement social protection programmes (including cash transfers and cash for work) to promote food security and reduce poverty and vulnerability resulting from lost income.
- Strengthen market-oriented value chains for crops, livestock and fisheries, ensuring that farmers are protected from price manipulation to increase farm-gate prices.
- Conduct training on food preservation and provide storage facilities to reduce post-harvest losses.
- Train and support farmers to grow pest-resistant and climate-resilient food and cash crops in order to increase their income potential.
- Address challenges related to rainfall variations, which make rainfed agriculture unreliable and render agricultural households vulnerable to climatic shocks. Invest over the long term in irrigation infrastructure and equipment, water infrastructure for domestic consumption and livestock rearing.
- Strengthen early warning systems for timely and appropriate anticipatory action in the medium and long term.

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Annex

Table 2. Comparison of second- and third-round data (percentage of respondents)

Indicator	Second round	Third round
Households reporting a decrease in main income source	54%	57%
Households reporting a shock	34%	23% ¹
Crop producers reporting production difficulties	54%	44%
Crop producers planting less area than in a typical year	24%	49%
Crop producers reporting difficulties accessing seeds	47%	17%
Crop producers reporting sales difficulties	63%	47%
Crop producers reporting a crop price decrease	42%	59%
Livestock producers reporting production difficulties	59%	50%
Livestock producers owning fewer animals than last year	33%	70%
Livestock producers reporting sales difficulties	89%	49%
Livestock producers reporting livestock price decrease	52%	57%
Households resorting to Crisis/Emergency coping strategies	40%	69%
Prevalence of low dietary diversity	14% ²	60%
Households reporting need for assistance	94%	94%

¹ Mainly non-cyclic shocks were considered. The proportion would have been higher if all existing shocks had been considered.

² This percentage was calculated by combining those in Crisis (3–4 food groups) and Emergency (0–2 food groups) according to the HDDS in the second round of data collection. People with Minimal and Stress levels of dietary diversity (5–12 food groups) were the majority in the second round (86 percent).



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