

Somalia NGO Consortium Statement on the High-Level Event for the Humanitarian Situation in Somalia

6th March 2018

London, United Kingdom

Monday 5th March 2018 - The focus of the High-Level Event for the Humanitarian Situation in Somalia is to draw attention to the humanitarian crisis in Somalia and generate political and financial momentum for the 2018 humanitarian response and recovery. The Event will bring together senior decision makers and partners to agree on how to plan and fund the 2018 humanitarian response, address priority gaps, review lessons from the successful 2017 famine prevention response and how these can be applied to best effect in 2018.

To ensure that this event is a success and brings out the desired results for the Somali people, the Somalia NGO Consortium members recommend that the conference focus on the following:

Continue scaled up and rapid response to ongoing drought in Somalia - The impact of the 2017 drought is still being felt by the communities further increasing their vulnerabilities. Significant humanitarian needs persist as a consequence of seasonal shocks, insecurity, and inadequate access to and provision of basic services. 5.4 million people are in need of assistance, 2.7 million of whom require urgent life-saving assistance, including nearly half a million people in IPC 4 (Emergency) who risk sliding into a humanitarian catastrophe if aid is not sustained. Rapid and scaled up response is key to reaching all and support is needed until the communities are able to cope and become resilient. This is only possible if there are dedicated resources for the response and recovery, well-coordinated synergies from all implementing partners and coverage of inaccessible areas of Somalia.

Better targeting to reduce malnutrition rates – Children and vulnerable communities are the hardest hit. Of the 5.4million people, 2.7 million children are in need of humanitarian assistance and protection. Nutrition is deteriorating with some of the worst Global Acute Malnutrition rates in the world. Over 1.2 million children are projected to be malnourished in 2018. Nearly 301,000 children under age five are acutely malnourished. Of these, 48,000 are severely malnourished and face death if urgent treatment is not provided. The highest malnutrition rates are among IDPs making the situation in the country critical. As most of the IDP camps are in urban areas, it is imperative to ensure they are equally targeted to ensure that the situation does not deteriorate.

Protecting the most vulnerable including children, women and marginalised communities – Concerns over the physical safety of the displaced, gender-based violence, recruitment and use of children by armed groups and by state actors, unaccompanied/separated children, violation and assault of vulnerable groups are all on the rise, in particular in areas with high concentration of newly displaced persons are. All actors have a critical role to play in providing strategic direction to ensure protection is accorded sufficient attention in the response, and that programme activities are guided by commonly agreed goals which are clear to all humanitarians and development actors. This would be better addressed if the every response funding stream and activity has protection lens. The current approach to Accountability to Affected Ppeople and a robust maintenance of common feedback mechanism has to be prioritized to ensure protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

Measures to address social exclusion of marginalized communities must be at the centre of the response – with lessons learned from the past where marginalized communities were

systematically excluded from access to assistance, the humanitarian community must put extra efforts to ensure that there is better targeting of beneficiaries and better context analysis around risks of exclusion.

Humanitarian response must be linked with early recovery and longer term resilience building initiatives - Recurring shocks in Somalia have increased vulnerability levels and worsened the humanitarian situation. Pastoralists, agro-pastoralists and Peri-Urban communities alike have witnessed repeated erosion of their livelihoods due to repeated shocks with insufficient recovery time and ongoing insecurity. There is a clear and urgent need to invest in recovery and resilience and make long term developmental investments that would promote economic growth and livelihoods and reduce the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance over time. **Multi-year planning & predictable financing** – is key to ensuring reduced vulnerabilities by repetitive shocks. The predictable, sustained and multi-year donor investment will help transition from emergencies and early recovery to development in agriculture (crop and livestock), fishing, WASH, nutrition, education and health.

Keeping the promises by Grand Bargain and localization- Response in Somalia should be supported by the increase of direct funding to local NGOs for humanitarian action. The facilitation of robust organizational support and committed resources to capacity strengthening will ensure that there is a reaffirmation of the Principles of Partnership amongst local and international players. Involving communities and ensuring citizen participation and accountability is also key to the growth and development of Somalia as well as a facet to localization.

Ensure unimpeded humanitarian access – Safe and predictable access is a fundamental prerequisite to effective humanitarian action. Full and unimpeded access is essential to establish operations, move goods and personnel where they are needed, implement distributions, provide health services and carry out other activities, and for affected populations to fully benefit from the assistance and services made available. Organisations increasingly grapple with bureaucratic impediments, restrictions on the type of aid programming permitted, widespread and sustained insecurity. In most parts of southern and central Somalia and some areas in the north, humanitarian actors' ability to reach people affected, as well as affected people's ability to access humanitarian assistance and services is severely constrained. This needs to be addressed on a priority basis and international community gathered in London can push for it and engage with all stakeholders to ensure it.

Somalia's Debt Cancellation can pave way for a brighter future – Somalia and its children's future is loaned to debt which they didn't create. It's high time that all take note and get things to move fast to help those in great difficulty. There are plenty of positive and negative stories that we hear about Somalia. But they don't convey the stories of hundreds and thousands of children in Somalia who need nutrition support, quality health services, and good education to build a better tomorrow and are facing extreme protection issues ranging from child labour to child soldiers. Many children's lives that could be saved with well-functioning health, education services and safety nets that are well catered by a stable government and its institutions. The countries which are in arrears to the IMF and World Bank are not eligible for debt relief. Nor can they receive funding through the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA). These arcane rules on arrears are excluding Somalia from one of the largest development financing pots. As many policy influencers gather in London, they have an opportunity to change this picture. Cancelling the debt would give Somalia access to long-term development finance and create the conditions for private investment.

End notes

- [Key Messages on Extended Severe Drought in Somalia by NGO Partners Operating In Somalia](#)
- Somalia NGO Consortium is a network of over 80 Local and International NGOs working in Somalia and Somaliland.
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Endorsed by the following Organizations;

