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AFRICA/SOMALIA - The long-awaited rain is making the humanitarian situation worse, according to a Report of Caritas

Mogadishu (Agenzia Fides)-About 4 million people are still at risk of hunger in Somalia, 3 million of these are in southern Somalia. This is what is said in the fourth "Situation Report" by Caritas Somalia of which a copy was sent to Fides.
"One million and 800,000 people living in Humanitarian Emergency and 830,000 people are living in Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis in both urban and rural areas. 750,000 people continue to live in famine conditions, including 260,000 IDPs and 450,000 residents in rural areas", says the Report.
"The much needed rain has begun to fall in much of Somalia, yet the production of this season's harvest will not be enough to sustain the population as a whole", continues the Report. Heavy rains have destroyed an estimated 100 dwellings in the Gedo region, displacing hundreds of people. Flooding threatens many low-lying areas, especially in Juba as well as the Shabelles and Mogadishu".
Consequently, there is a large concern for disease outbreaks associated with the start of the rainy season. Acute diarrhea, malaria, dengue fever and pneumonia due to hypothermia. WHO (World Health Organization) has recently warned of a possible cholera outbreak in Mogadishu due to the increasing rains and poor conditions involving drainage and sanitary conditions in the IDP camps.
In southern Somalia, advancing Kenyan troops in a border area between the two Countries has resulted in new fleeing of the population, but at present it is unclear if there will be an increase in arrivals in the refugee camps in Dadaab (in Kenya).
Caritas Somalia, Caritas Switzerland and Luxembourg and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) continue their activities, both in Somalia and neighboring countries to assist populations in need.
Caritas Somalia and Caritas Internationalis have convened all Caritas organizations working in Somalia to a meeting that will be held in Nairobi on November 9th. The purpose of the meeting is to provide an update on Caritas programs in Somalia, brainstorm possible mid-to-long-term solutions for the country and discuss possible Caritas advocacy initiatives. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 26/10/2011)

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