

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Innovative virtual reality film provides stark insight into life in drought-affected Somalia

Save the Children Ambassador Sir Mo Farah speaks out as new survey shows 2,700 Somalis displaced by global warming every day

FILM AVAILABLE TO VIEW [HERE](#)

Berlin, 06.07.2018. 'Famine' is one of a series of four immersive films highlighting the tangible consequences of climate change. Save the Children partnered with [Participant Media](#) and [Condition One](#) who filmed and produced *This is Climate Change*, a critically-acclaimed virtual reality (VR) film that transports the viewer into an intense visual experience as never seen before.

'Famine' was shot in drought-devastated communities in Puntland, northern Somalia, in 2017 and tells the stories of a camel herder, a grieving mother, and a doctor who stops at nothing to save the lives of those starving babies.

Using advanced 3D 360 stereoscopic technology, the film takes audiences inside a Save the Children-supported intensive care ward for severely malnourished children.

Save the Children Ambassador [Sir Mo Farah](#) who was born in Somalia and is a strong advocate for his country of birth, said: "It breaks my heart to see children suffering in these drought-hit areas of Somalia. Climate change is affecting the poorest communities year after year – from drought, to floods, to conflict – and these people are enduring so much.

"I am a father of four kids and I can only begin to imagine how painful it must be to listen to your children begging for food and water as they become weaker by the day. These youngsters are especially vulnerable, and they shouldn't have to suffer."

The shocking reality of Somalia's climate-driven displacement crisis is now available for media outlets to download and host online. The film's release coincides with survey data from Save the Children and Action Against Hunger, gathered in March and published today which found that one in five children in these displacement settlements is suffering from malnutrition.*

Currently there are 2.6 million displaced people in Somalia, the majority forced from their homes because of the recent drought, including half a million this year alone. An average of 2,777 people are being displaced every day in 2018** after losing their crops, livestock and livelihoods.

"Whilst the drought is over, the battle to save lives is not," said Timothy Bishop, Country Director for Save the Children Somalia. "Malnutrition remains a major concern, because rain is not an immediate treatment for malnutrition. For every failed rainy season, communities tell us they need at least two normal rains to harvest crops and for livestock herds to regenerate. Unfortunately, floods have now swept away many of the new crops and killed many of the remaining goats."

"Somalia is experiencing a complete polarization of weather, from the worst drought, to the worst floods in 50 years," Bishop added. "This is climate change in action and its devastating impact meted out on the most vulnerable. It's outrageous that Somalia has the world's worst child death rate — 13 percent of children do not live to see their fifth birthday."

"*This Is Climate Change* uses the unique immersive qualities of virtual reality to show the tangible impact of a global issue that can sometimes feel remote," says Elise Pearlstein, Senior Vice President of Documentary Film and Television for Participant Media. "Hopefully through the series and the episode 'Famine', people will be compelled to learn more, and most importantly, to get involved."

Save the Children is committed to working together to sustain life-saving assistance for children and families affected by drought and flood. 5.4 million people need humanitarian assistance. The aid agency is calling on donors to invest in long-term resilience building to help Somali communities better withstand the shocks of disasters and bounce back much quicker.

ENDS

To help children affected by drought visit our [East Africa food crisis appeal](#).

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Notes to Editors

* The joint Nutrition Survey by Action Against Hunger and Save the Children conducted in March 2018 (verified by the Somalia Nutrition Cluster) was published 5 June 2018 and found:

Global Acute Malnutrition rates by district:

Mataban IDP settlements: 20.5%, Dollow IDP settlements: 19.3%
Garowe IDP settlements: 15.1%, Galkayo IDP settlements: 17.1%
Mogadishu IDP settlements: 16.3%
Iskushuban: 11.5%
Beletweyne: 15.9%
Kismayo 11.9%
Cadaado: 9.9%
Burao: 13.7%

An additional nutrition survey is being conducted following the recent rains and will be published in the coming months.

**500,000 displaced in 2018 so far. Divided by 6 months, divided by 30 days = 2,777 people a day.
<http://www.fsnau.org/downloads/fsnau-fews-net-revised-april-june-2018-ipc-figures-somalia-22-may-201>

- Media can embed 'Famine' onto their sites by using the following embed code: `<iframe width="540" height="270" src="//player.with.in/index.html?id=10030" frameborder="0" allow="vr" allowfullscreen allowvr></iframe>`
- *This Is Climate Change-Famine* premiered to critical acclaim at this year's Tribeca Film Festival in New York. It also featured at the Sheffield International Documentary Festival in the UK and AFI Doc Fest in Washington DC. It can be viewed on the [WITHIN](#) app, which is available on iOS, Android and all major headsets. Simply download the WITHIN app and then view the film in 360 degrees, or if you have a headset, in full virtual reality.
- *This Is Climate Change* is a four-part VR documentary series. Besides *Famine*, other episodes include *Melting Ice*, *Fire* and *Feast*.
- *This Is Climate Change*, produced by Participant Media in association with Condition One, was created and directed by Danfung Dennis and Eric Strauss, executive produced by Jeff Skoll, Elise Pearlstein, Kathy Davidov and Casey Brown, and produced by Diana El-Osta and Catherine Yrisarri. Virtual and augmented reality distribution company [WITHIN](#) will distribute the series on its platform.
- Save the Children and Action Against Hunger conducted SMART surveys to quantify prevalence of acute malnutrition among populations in ten regions of Somalia and Somaliland

in March 2018. The surveys assessed prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) among targeted populations and found GAM of between 9.9 and 20.5 percent across the 10 districts. Prevalence of 15 per cent indicates a nutrition emergency; prevalence below 5 per cent is considered acceptable.

- Forty-five thousand children between six months and five years of age are malnourished across the 10 districts, with 90,000 children at risk of malnutrition.

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About Save the Children

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. Around the world, we work every day to give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. When crisis strikes, and children are most vulnerable, we are always among the first to respond and the last to leave. We ensure children's unique needs are met and their voices are heard. We deliver lasting results for millions of children, including those hardest to reach.

We do whatever it takes for children – every day and in times of crisis – transforming their lives and the future we share.