

Aimed at the most vulnerable, UNHCR has scaled up its response, providing Protection, Shelter, Core Relief Items and Cash to 185,000 drought affected individuals

Situation Overview

Somalia is experiencing the worst drought in the last 40 years, surpassing the 2010/11 and 2016/17 droughts, as a result of four consecutive failed rainy seasons. The unprecedented climatic event has affected more than 7 million Somalis, with about 45 per cent of the country facing acute food insecurity. The latest data from the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification suggests that 17 districts will face famine by September, if there is widespread failure in crop and livestock production, commodity prices continue to rise, and humanitarian assistance is not sufficiently scaled up.

The drought has exacerbated the vulnerabilities of millions of people living in the impoverished country that has been mired by decades of insecurity and political upheaval. With safe water and sanitation in short supply and hunger rising, children are dying from malnourishment and diseases. The drought is also causing large scale displacement of women and children, who constitute of over 80 per cent of the displaced population, bearing the brunt of the crisis. The number of unaccompanied and separated minors as well as gender-based violence incidents are on the rise in IDP sites. The UNHCR-led Protection and Return Monitoring Network (PRMN) has recorded 1 million people displaced due to drought since 2021, with 758,000 individuals displaced between January and July 2022.



IDP families receive lifesaving household items in Dhobley, Jubaland. © UNHCR

UNHCR and Partners' Response¹

BENEFICIARIES

	Protection Interventions	134,000
	Core Relief Items	101,800
	Cash Assistance	55,423
	Emergency Shelters	32,790

UNHCR, as a part of an inter-agency response, and in consultation with the local authorities and partners, has been assisting the drought-affected displaced population through specific protection interventions, emergency shelter and Core Relief Item (CRI) distributions, and cash transfers, targeting the most vulnerable drought affected persons with specific needs. Through its leadership in Protection, CCCM, and Shelter Clusters, UNHCR is coordinating response

activities in the respective three sectors. UNHCR prioritizes drought-affected areas as well as vulnerable individuals, such as female or child headed households, minorities, disabled persons, GBV survivors, unaccompanied and separated children, elderly, pregnant or lactating mothers and others in its response.

UNHCR responds with life-saving shelter and CRI interventions. Under the drought response, some 101,800 IDPs and host communities received CRIs, which are comprised of basic household items, either in cash or in-kind. Likewise, more than 32,790 IDPs benefited from in-kind or monetized emergency shelter support.

Additionally, UNHCR has also distributed multipurpose cash grants to some 29,523 IDPs and host community members in south-central Somalia, allowing drought affected families to prioritize and address their needs with dignity.

Somalia's refugee, asylum-seeker and returnee [populations](#) face unique challenges in local integration and in rebuilding their lives, for example, building social capital and earning a livelihood. Despite their tenacity

¹ Activities reported are from November 2021, in line with the declaration of a national emergency by the Federal Government of Somalia

and resilience, the effects of the prolonged drought have compounded their vulnerabilities. UNHCR has supported some 25,900 vulnerable refugees, asylum-seekers and returnees with cash assistance to help them meet their basic needs.

UNHCR's protection interventions for the drought affected displaced communities include protection monitoring, needs assessment, referrals to specialized service providers, and responding to the needs of the most vulnerable individuals. Affected population are also reached through Gender-based Violence (GBV) prevention, mitigation, and response activities, including awareness raising, information campaigns, emergency protection cash assistance, and distribution of sanitary materials and dignity kits to women and girls of reproductive age groups, to name a few.

Unmet needs

According to the [Protection Returns Monitoring Network \(PRMN\)](#) data and assessments conducted by UNHCR and partners targeting drought affected persons, food, livelihood support, shelter, water, health, and protection violations against women and children as the top needs and protection concerns in the data. Drought affected IDPs belonging to minority clans, elderly without support, people living with disability, and at-risk women and children among others are more vulnerable and face heightened protection risks.

UNHCR is working with partners and seeking additional funds to avert the worst outcomes of the current drought situation.

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UNHCR is scaling up its GBV prevention, risk mitigation, and response programme in drought affected hard-to-reach areas in South-West State. Key interventions include capacity building of local partners to provide comprehensive GBV prevention and response activities including legal assistance, psychosocial services (PSS), case management, and referrals to specialized agencies.

UNHCR has already reached some 134,000 individuals through various protection activities.

Other multi-sectoral activities that benefit drought affected persons of concern include health, livelihoods, and durable solution initiatives.