

## **DROUGHT SITUATION RESPONSE UPDATE**

August 2022



*Internally displaced Somali children stand near the carcass of their dead livestock as a result of severe droughts near Dollow, Gedo Region, Somalia. © Reuters/Feisal Omar*

### **Situation Overview**

On 28 June 2022, UNHCR launched a regional [Drought Response Emergency Appeal for the Horn of Africa](#) appealing for urgent support to help displaced people and local host communities affected by the catastrophic drought. To deliver life-saving assistance and protection to some 1.5 million refugees, internally displaced people and host communities affected by the drought in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia, UNHCR requires US\$ 42.6 million to cover critical humanitarian needs in IDP and refugee settlements including water, sanitation facilities, nutrition, healthcare, and protection until the end of 2022. UNHCR is targeting 943,000 IDPs in Ethiopia and Somalia and 576,000 refugees along with their host communities in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

Inside **Somalia**, more than 758,000 people have been internally displaced due to drought in 2022, bringing the total figure to more than 1 million people since January 2021 when the drought began. Water sources have dried up and crops and livestock have died, stripping people of their livelihoods and the ability to support themselves. The catastrophic drought is putting communities on the brink of famine as underscored by humanitarian leaders including High Commissioner Grandi in a recent [joint statement](#) warning that the window for preventing a famine in Somalia is closing, calling for action and additional resources to provide urgent assistance and avert a worst case scenario.. The situation is likely to worsen as a fifth failed rainy season is expected.

In **Ethiopia**, new internal displacements due to both conflict and drought – particularly in the drought affected Somali and Oromia regions – have put a strain on the already limited resources available to support UNHCR’s people of concern in Ethiopia. Over 16,000 Somalis had crossed into Dollo Ado, Ethiopia from the end of 2021 to June 2022. The effects of the drought are compounded by a 50% cut in food assistance to refugees throughout the country. The rise in the price of fuel, fertilizers, construction materials, labour cost, and overall cost of living is making the life of refugees, IDPs and host communities unbearable, while also increasing the cost of humanitarian operations.

In **Kenya**, 19 of the 23 arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) counties are experiencing the effects of drought. Turkana and Garissa, each of which hosts over 220,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, are particularly affected by the ongoing drought, and are among the 14 counties that are in a crisis state of food insecurity. Garissa is also among the counties experiencing high rates of acute malnutrition. Over 10,000 Somali refugees have also arrived in Kenya this year, fleeing a complex mix of conflict and drought. Another 8,000 mainly South Sudanese refugees have arrived to the drought affected Kakuma camp.

## UNHCR response

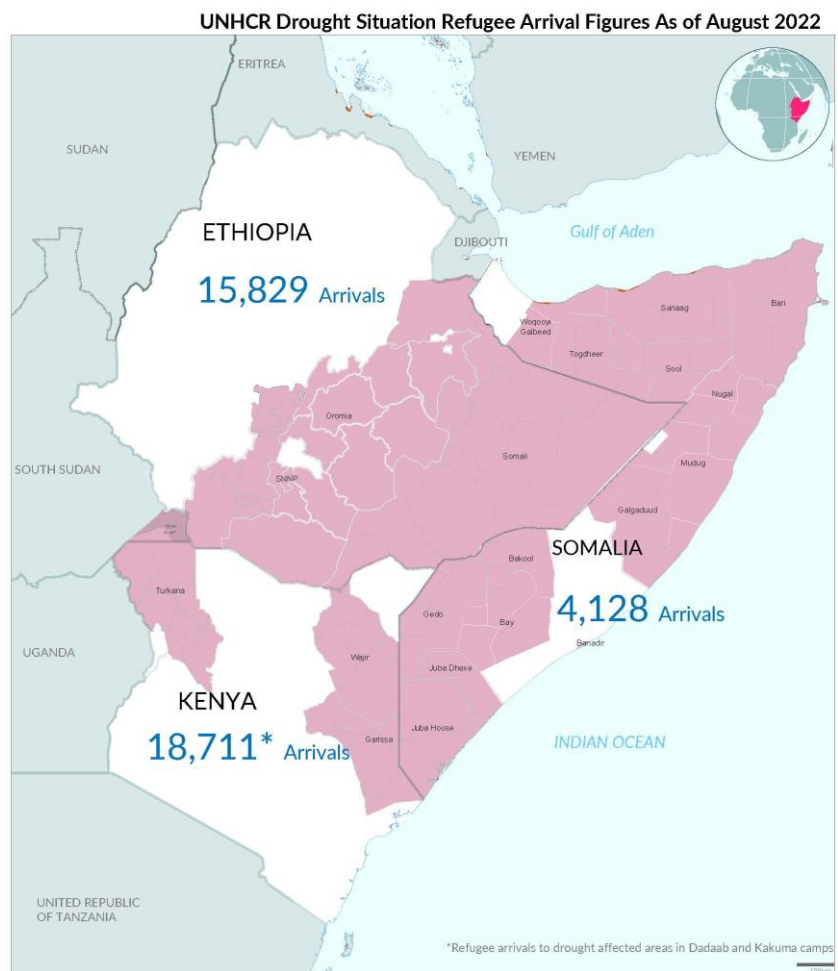
UNHCR is delivering life-saving shelter, water, sanitation facilities, nutrition, healthcare, cash assistance and protection to people forced to flee and affected by the catastrophic drought in Somalia as well as neighbouring Ethiopia and Kenya. Response activities are being carried out as mandated in the cluster response mechanism for IDP situations and under the Refugee Coordination Model as relevant.

### SOMALIA

As part of the UN wide scale-up, UNHCR has deployed a Senior Emergency Coordinator and is increasing staffing capacity in priority areas (protection, shelter, information management) through deployments from our emergency roster.

UNHCR leads the coordination of the protection cluster and response and the [Protection and Returns Monitoring Network](#) that is tracking drought induced internal displacement. Separated and unaccompanied children are being provided with medical assistance, psychosocial support, and counselling as well as safe spaces to protect them against exploitation and forced recruitment by armed actors. Families at risk of being evicted from their homes due to loss of income are also receiving legal assistance.

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.

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 reached some 134,000 individuals through various protection activities as of August 2022.

UNHCR also leads the camp coordination and camp management and shelter clusters and in terms of operational response has so far distributed shelter materials, hygiene items, and other necessities to more than 185,000 drought-affected people. As part of the humanitarian scale up, we are increasing this support through both in-kind and cash-based assistance and seeking to help more people in hard-to-reach areas, largely through local partners.

## **ETHIOPIA**

UNHCR is intensifying its response to drought-impacted displaced communities within the main drought affected locations where we are working in the Somali and Oromia regions. Recent assessment missions to areas that have not yet received assistance are finding 100% crop failure and extreme levels of livestock death, hundreds of thousands of cases of child malnutrition, and hospitals and schools not functioning due to water shortages.

In the refugee response, cash assistance is being introduced for the most vulnerable refugee families to help fill part of the gap in food security with refugees in Ethiopia receiving only 50% of daily food needs. In addition, and in collaboration with partners, UNHCR has provided nutritional supplements for refugees and treatment for severely malnourished children. Nutrition and outbreak surveillance is ongoing at the Dollo Ado reception center, within camps and the host communities. Investment in water infrastructure is serving both refugees and their host communities, which includes new internally displaced persons who have moved towards the camps in search of assistance.

In the IDP response to the drought situation, UNHCR has increased distribution of emergency shelter, core relief items, and is also providing emergency education and child protection support. UNHCR has recently reached some 16,400 IDPs with emergency lifesaving core relief items consisting of plastic sheets, jerrycans, kitchen sets, laundry soap, heavy duty buckets, mosquito nets, blankets, solar lanterns, dignity kits and winter clothing. Water support to IDPs affected by drought and surrounding host communities includes UNHCR provided trucked water in Qoto-roble of Kebribeyah woreda, Aw-barre and Gidhibka IDP site in Jigjiga city, Somali region.

In Oromia region, core relief items have been distributed to over 900 drought affected households in 3 woredas of West Guji zone and 642 households were assisted in Dubluk woreda (Borena zone). In East Guji zone, UNHCR plans to distribute CRIs to 3,000 IDPs affected by the drought in September.

## **KENYA**

UNHCR's response primarily focuses on health and nutrition interventions to stabilize new refugee arrivals in Garissa and Turkana counties, as well as cash assistance, emergency shelter and core relief items. We are also extending support to drought-stricken host communities, helping to address water scarcity through rehabilitation of boreholes and water distribution systems, provision of water by trucking, and procurement of water tanks, generators and fuel.

Other UNHCR-supported drought response activities in Garissa, implemented by the Government and partners, include distribution of assorted seeds and tools, livestock disease surveillance, provision of livestock survival feeds, medical outreach services, distribution of livestock feed supplements, and the provision of water storage tanks to communities around the county.



UNHCR staff receiving new arrivals in Ifo refugee camp, Dadaab, Kenya. © UNHCR/ Mohamed Aden Maalim

## Funding

In June, UNHCR released a regional [Drought Response Emergency Appeal for the Horn of Africa](#), **requesting US\$42.6 million** to address critical humanitarian needs for some 1.5 million refugees, internally displaced people and local host communities affected by the drought in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia. The appeal covers the period May-December 2022 to align with the inter-agency drought response plans coordinated by OCHA at country level and derived from the relevant Humanitarian Response Plans.

So far, UNHCR has **received US\$2.3 million** specifically for the drought response since May; the overall funding levels of the three country operations indicate that approximately **32% of the funds** required for UNHCR's drought response are available based on unearmarked and broadly earmarked contributions received this year (37% Ethiopia, 29% Kenya, 25% Somalia).

## Contacts

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