

Protection and tangible lifesaving assistance delivered to 200,000 drought affected individuals in 2022

Situation Overview

The failure of four consecutive rainy seasons, increase in conflict, and high food prices are pushing people in Somalia to the brink of famine. A multi-partner [IPC analysis](#) released in September 2022 has projected that famine will occur between October and December in the Bay region, specifically among rural residents in the Baidoa and Burhakaba districts as well as displaced people in Baidoa, if humanitarian assistance is not urgently scaled up and sustained. The drought has affected about 7.8 million people, nearly half of Somalia's estimated population. The UNHCR-led [Protection Returns Monitoring Network \(PRMN\)](#) has recorded 1.1 million people displaced due to drought since 2021, with 857,000 individuals displaced between January and August 2022.

The drought has disproportionately affected vulnerable displaced and non-displaced population across Somalia, with the worst affected regions being Hirshabelle, Galmudug, South-West, and Jubaland states. The current situation is exacerbated by insecurity, access constraints, and weak capacity of service providers, including local NGOs and authorities. Moreover, women, children, persons with disabilities, and those from minority social groups/clans are the worst affected. According to Gender Based Violence (GBV) AoR assessment, 82 per cent of IDPs are women and children, many of whom are at risk of food insecurity and in danger of sexual violence, exploitation, abuse, and psychological harm due to breakdown of existing social support networks.



UNHCR assessing the condition and needs of a newly displaced family in Luglow, Kismayo district, Jubaland. © JUCRI

UNHCR and Partners' Response

BENEFICIARIES

	Protection Interventions	149,000
	Core Relief Items	141,290
	Cash Assistance	56,102
	Emergency Shelters	33,000

UNHCR is part of the inter-agency drought response and leads Protection, Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM), and Shelter Clusters in Somalia. Through the three clusters and in close coordination with authorities and other stakeholders, UNHCR has been strengthening sub-national coordination, with better information sharing and communication and enhanced synergies between clusters. For example in IDP sites across the camps, CCCM and Nutrition partners are working together to identify malnutrition cases among new arrivals.

In order to increase field presence and support the overall response, the UNHCR has mobilized 25 staff, who specialize in protection, shelter, information management, inter-agency coordination, and logistics/supply among others, in emergency missions across drought affected areas such as Baidoa, Dollow, Galkayo, and Kismayo.

UNHCR continued the delivery of integrated GBV prevention, risk mitigation, and response interventions in the affected regions. Key GBV activities implemented include awareness raising, information campaigns, legal assistance, psychosocial services (PSS), case management, and referrals to specialized agencies. In addition, UNHCR is supporting capacity building of national partners and mainstreaming of GBV prevention and risk mitigation measures across the four priority clusters, i.e., Food Security, Nutrition, Health, and WASH as well as distribution of sanitary materials and dignity kits to women and girls of reproductive age, in collaboration with UNFPA.

To strengthen community-based protection (CBP) mechanism for the affected population, UNHCR in close coordination with the government and key partners has strengthened community-based outreach and monitoring, complaint and feedback mechanisms, and identification of vulnerable groups and minority clans.

UNHCR has been scaling up its protection response programming in the drought affected areas. Activities such as protection monitoring and identification and provision of specialized assistance, such as distribution of assistive devices, to persons with specific needs are ongoing. Furthermore, static and mobile Protection Desks are being established to strengthen accountability towards the persons UNHCR serves, improve service provision through case referrals to specialized service providers, and address marginalization of minority clans by identifying them and increasing their participation in camp management activities. Meanwhile, capacity building on protection-mainstreaming, Code of Conduct, and basic concepts of GBV and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) targeting local authorities, partners, and community support structures in drought affected hard to reach areas, particularly in Gedo region in Jubaland and Bay region in South-West State, will commence soon.

UNHCR has already reached more than 149,000 individuals through above protection activities.

UNHCR has been responding to the drought with life-saving shelter and CRI assistance. Some 141,290 IDPs and host communities have received CRIs, which are comprised of basic household items, such as kitchen sets, blankets, and jerry cans to name a few, either in cash or in-kind. Likewise, more than 33,000 IDPs have

benefited from in-kind or monetized emergency shelter support.

Additionally, UNHCR has also distributed emergency protection and multipurpose cash grants to some 30,131 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 and resilience, the effects of the prolonged drought have compounded their vulnerabilities. UNHCR has supported some 25,971 vulnerable refugees, asylum-seekers and returnees with cash assistance to help them meet their basic needs.

Other multi-sectoral activities that benefit drought affected persons of concern include CCCM interventions such as IDP site maintenance through cash for work schemes, installation of street solar lights, distribution of portable solar lights to female headed households, and capacity building of community leaders to improve self-management of IDP sites. Furthermore, to enhance resilience, sustainable livelihood activities are underway in drought affected regions of south-central Somalia.

Unmet needs

According to the PRMN data and assessments conducted by UNHCR and partners targeting drought affected displaced population, food, shelter, livelihood support, water, health, and protection violations against women and children were identified as the top needs and protection concerns.

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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