



Somalia

ECHO FACTSHEET

Facts & Figures

Number of IDPs (UNHCR): 1.1 million

Somali refugees in the region (UNHCR): almost 1 million

Over 3 million people in need of assistance; out of which over 1 million are in a crisis or emergency situation

1 out of 7 children is acutely malnourished.

1 in 10 Somali children die before their first birthday.

1 in 12 women die from pregnancy related causes.

ECHO funding:

2014 - €49.65 million

2013 - €53.1 million

2012 - €60.8 million

2011 - €77 million

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Key messages

- Three years after a famine ravaged parts of Somalia, the country is threatened by another food crisis. For the first time since the 2011 crisis, the number of people facing crisis and emergency food security situation has exceeded 1 million.
- Food security has deteriorated sharply especially in south-central Somalia as a result of poor rains, reduced funding, restricted access, and conflict disrupting economic and agricultural activities.
- Drought has been declared in six regions of South-Central Somalia in July this year with many other areas put under alert.
- Over 3 million people are in need of assistance, out of which over 1 million are in a crisis or emergency situation.
- Somalia's 1.1 million displaced people remain particularly vulnerable. Over 60 per cent of those unable to meet their food needs are displaced and often face violence, discrimination and abuse.
- Delivering aid in Somalia is extremely difficult. Aid workers face security threats and restrictions to access people in need, making it more important than ever to fully apply and respect humanitarian principles.

Humanitarian situation and needs

Situation in the country

The steady improvement in access to food after the 2011 drought and famine crisis has stalled. Poor rainy seasons, reduced humanitarian funding, increasing food prices, disruption of agriculture and rising displacements as a result of the government-led military offensive and localized conflicts, are some of the factors worsening the already acute crisis. The situation is deteriorating and is not expected to reverse until the next harvest in January 2015.

Drought has already been declared in six regions of South-Central Somalia with many other areas under alert. At present, over 1 million individuals are in acute crisis and cannot meet their food needs, while 2.1 million are at risk. Due to the drought conditions and the on-going conflict, food commodities and water prices are on the rise making it impossible for the most vulnerable to meet their basic needs.

Currently, 1.1 million people are uprooted from their homes inside Somalia and a further 1 million are living as refugees in neighbouring countries. All the major settlements for internally displaced people (IDPs) are considered to be in a food security crisis.

Violation of human rights and International Humanitarian Law place civilians at risk daily. Sexual violence against women is at worrying levels. The main provider of free healthcare in Somalia, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), pulled out of the country in August 2013 after 22 years citing unacceptable security threats to its staff as the reason. Somalia remains one of the most complex environments in which to deliver aid.

Strict application of humanitarian principles enshrined in the EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid is necessary to maintain assistance and to ensure the safety of aid workers. Blurring the lines between humanitarian aid on the one hand and political and military objectives on the other needs to be avoided.

Major needs and related problems

Acute malnutrition continues to afflict hundreds of thousands of children, especially in the south of the country. 218 000 children under the age of five are malnourished, of whom 43 800 are at risk of dying if they do not receive treatment. Such persistent emergency levels of malnutrition are not just related to food intake but also to dietary balance, disease, lack of clean water, poor access to healthcare and hygiene practices.

Access to healthcare is extremely poor due to the deficiency of basic services. Children and mothers are particularly affected as child and maternal mortality rates increase. One in 10 Somali children die before their first birthday and one in 12 women die from pregnancy related causes. Somalia is also regularly affected by epidemics such as measles, cholera and has recently faced the largest new polio emergency in the world. As a result of the persistent conflict and violence, war surgery and specialized treatment for victims is still highly needed.

Displaced persons continue to face emergency needs related to shelter, water, protection and food access. Aside from meeting the most urgent needs, solutions are also needed on the return of the displaced to their place of origin or permanent resettlement. A military offensive has put on hold the voluntary return of IDPs, and refugees from Kenya following the signing of a Tripartite Agreement for the voluntary repatriation of Somalis.

Urgent assistance is needed to prevent a severe deterioration in the food security and nutrition situation and to ensure immediate access to food while also supporting and protecting livelihoods. Sustained assistance will ensure continuous progress in helping the most vulnerable to recover from the drought, to find solutions to displacement that respect their rights and dignity, and to build their resilience to future crises.



The European Union's Response

Funding

ECHO provided humanitarian assistance to Somalia since early 1994. In 2011, the famine year, the European Commission allocated €77 million in humanitarian aid to Somalia. In 2012, €60.8 million was allocated and in 2013 a total of €53.1 million. In 2014, €49.65 million has been made available to support lifesaving assistance in the country.

Through these funds, the Commission continues to provide support in the areas of protection, food security, health, nutrition, shelter, water/sanitation/hygiene and coordination of aid. These actions focus mainly on the most affected regions of south and central Somalia, where the needs are still the greatest. They also address pockets of vulnerability in Puntland and Somaliland.

The Commission helps with humanitarian partners' capacity to respond to new crises through in-built emergency preparedness and response capacity funding. In a context of limited access, this approach has proven effective to ensure that partners are ready and able to initiate a rapid response to new localized emergencies.

Over the past few years, support has been provided to displaced families wishing to return to their original homes and those living in IDP settlements who wish to settle permanently in their new homes, with cooperation with local authorities and communities to facilitate their integration.

Commission's aid is dependent on the implementation capacity of its operational partners on the ground, their level of access to populations and their ability to operate in circumstances that are risky for staff and extremely difficult in Somalia. Longer-term development solutions are needed to build on these initial success stories and uphold equal rights in the region.

Examples of humanitarian projects in Somalia



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Responding to natural disasters

At the end of 2013, extensive flooding and intensified conflict affected Jowhar District in Middle Shabelle. Thousands were displaced while houses, property and crops were destroyed at a critical time for farming. Using emergency response funds, **Danish Refugee Council (DRC)** reacted quickly by providing housing material and utensils to 1 000 displaced families and cash transfers to 420 vulnerable families. DRC also provided new farming tools to over 750 families who had lost the means to work their land during the next rainy season.

Life-saving healthcare

SOS Children's Village runs a clinic in Badbadho camp – which hosts more than 36 000 displaced people – and a hospital in Heliwa district, reaching over 200 000 patients in Mogadishu every year. These facilities provide life-saving, quality health care including specialized care such as surgery, emergency obstetrics, and malnutrition treatment. SOS performs 450 deliveries through skilled birth attendants every month. A special centre provides care for survivors of sexual violence. Despite many years of conflict in Mogadishu, the hospital has continued to treat its patients without interruption, including when an active front line forced it to relocate temporarily.



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Solutions to displacement

As a result of drought and conflict, thousands of Somalis have sought refuge in more stable cities such as Hargeisa. Many of these internally displaced persons have been living in unsanitary and undignified conditions in makeshift settlements where they could not legally settle. In January 2014, **Norwegian Refugee Council** (NRC) and Danish Refugee Council (DRC) successfully relocated over 800 families to a newly-established site, providing safe and clean shelter and sanitation facilities. The authorities assisted with assigning the land. Though it is still a long way until the displaced enjoy the same rights and opportunities as resident populations, especially in terms of jobs and livelihoods, the site begins to resemble a new suburb, with private bus services and power connections being established. Thus, these families can start to build a new life as full members of the local community.



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Malnutrition

Humanitarian access in Hiraan region is constantly hampered, and the area has been plagued with critical malnutrition levels since July 2011. With the support of ECHO, a total of 26 085 children under-five and 4 178 pregnant and lactating women received treatment for malnutrition and other essential nutrition services in 2012 and 2013. More than 10 000 of these children suffered from severe acute malnutrition and without treatment, they would most likely have died. In late 2013, **Save the Children** responded to worsening food insecurity in Beletweyne and Mataban districts. 4 000 families benefited from cash transfers to meet their essential food and non-food needs during the extended hunger period, which prevented more children from becoming malnourished.



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Responding to conflict

In Awdhegele district, Lower Shabelle hundreds of people were caught up in recent inter-clan fighting and were forced to flee their villages. **Concern Worldwide** was able to respond rapidly to the needs of 300 families that sought refuge in a nearby village by activating an emergency response mechanism. The families were provided with cash to meet their immediate needs, while the local community helped with initial food and allowed them to shelter in a local school. Those families that did not have a mobile phone received a free solar-rechargeable handset to access the mobile cash transfer.

