



Kenya

ECHO FACTSHEET

Facts & Figures

Number of food insecure people: **3 million**

Number of people in need of safe water: **2.7 million**

Number of refugees: **nearly 500 000**

Sources: UN, UNOCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF

European Commission humanitarian aid:
2017: €18.8 million

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A primary school student at Kakuma refugee camp, where the EU funds education. @EU/ECHO/Bertha Wangari

Key messages

- Three million people in Kenya are food insecure and in need of humanitarian assistance. 23 out of a total 47 counties are facing severe drought. The government of Kenya has declared a national drought emergency. The drought is ravaging the arid and semi-arid lands of Kenya, but also vast parts of Somalia and Ethiopia. It is attributed to below average rains in the [Horn of Africa*](#) region.
- Kenya hosts nearly 500 000 [refugees*](#) mainly from [South Sudan](#), [Somalia](#) and the Great Lakes' region. Citing security concerns, Kenya wants to expedite the repatriation of Somali refugees and close the camps in Dadaab which host refugees for over 25 years. However, this decision is currently in a legal limbo: the High Court in Nairobi blocked it but the government can appeal the ruling.
- Since December 2014, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has overseen the repatriation of over 57 000 Somali refugees from Kenya to different parts of Somalia. A pre-famine alert has been issued for Somalia in February 2017. The perception is that the right conditions are not in place for a mass return of refugees.
- Over 80 000 refugees have arrived in Kakuma camp since conflict broke out in [South Sudan*](#) in 2013, bringing the camp's population to 165 000 while initially designed for 125 000 people. New arrivals are being sent to a new site, at Kalobeyei, which is already more than half-full. Kalobeyei was initially intended to offer an alternative to camps, with refugees able to live and work alongside the local Turkana community.
- Over the years, the European Commission has maintained its humanitarian support for refugee operations, while at the same time focusing on building the resilience of communities and the capacity of authorities to prepare for and respond to emergencies. So far, EU aid disbursed for Kenya in 2017 amounts to €18.8.million.

Humanitarian situation and needs

Half of Kenya's 47 counties have been hit by a drought that is also affecting other countries in the Horn of Africa region, mainly Somalia and Ethiopia. Out of the three million food insecure people in Kenya, 1.1 million are children. Some of the worst affected communities live along the Mandera triangle, where the borders of Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia meet; a region that witnessed outbreaks of diseases such as chikungunya, dengue fever, cholera and measles. Drought-related deaths have already been reported in the Marsabit county in northern Kenya.

The situation is compounded by a deteriorating security situation in northern Kenya. Several severe attacks have made it difficult for the population to access services. The safety, especially of non-local health and education staff, is threatened and humanitarian organisations are having more difficulty reaching the areas with the highest needs.

Kenya hosts close to 500 000 refugees mainly in camps around Dadaab and Kakuma, as well as in Nairobi. Thousands of South Sudanese refugees continue to arrive in Kakuma, joining previous waves of refugees from [South Sudan](#)* but also from Somalia and the Great Lakes' region. Refugees are no longer going to the overcrowded Kakuma camp, but to a settlement in Kalobeyei. With a capacity of about 40 000 people and initially planned as an alternative settlement where refugees and local community members can live and work together, Kalobeyei is already more than half full. The risk is that Kalobeyei becomes yet another refugee camp.

In 2013, the governments of Kenya and Somalia, as well as UNHCR agreed to start the safe and voluntary repatriation of refugees to Somalia. By March 2017, over 57 000 people had been assisted to voluntarily return to Somalia. However, the UN has issued a pre-famine alert for Somalia where half the population is now food insecure mainly due to the severe drought. Conditions are currently not conducive for a mass return of refugees. While Kenya maintains its intention to close the camps in Daadab with a population of over 256 000 individuals and repatriate the Somali refugees to Somalia, a High Court in Nairobi blocked such a move. The government can appeal to the court ruling but has not yet done so.

Kenya's in-camp policy signifies that refugees have limited opportunities to earn a living or obtain a level of self-reliance.

The European Union's Humanitarian Response

The European Commission has allocated over €120 million in humanitarian funding to Kenya since 2012. The focus has been on supporting refugee operations; building the resilience of populations who are vulnerable to drought and natural hazards in Kenya's arid north; improving the care for acutely malnourished children; and on emergency preparedness and response, among others to the cholera outbreak.

In 2017, the European Commission has allocated €18.8 million to Kenya so far in order to continue supporting the assistance to the refugees and to support the humanitarian emergency response to the ongoing drought.

In the refugee camps in Dadaab and Kakuma, the Commission's Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) continues to support basic life-saving care and services such as healthcare, [nutrition](#)*, [water](#)*, sanitation and hygiene, protection as well as [education](#)*. ECHO also supports the roll-out of [electronic food vouchers](#)* which replaces part of the refugees' in-kind food rations. Moreover, concerted efforts are made to improve the safety of children and women in the camp through community-based protection interventions.

The EU has also supported the Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) for preparedness and response to disasters. Given the remoteness of refugee camps and other humanitarian programmes in the



volatile northern regions, the EU operates the humanitarian air service [ECHO Flight*](#), which is available for humanitarian partner organisations at no cost.

Examples of EU Funded Humanitarian Projects in Kenya



Working with the World Food Programme (WFP), the EU supported the introduction of [digital cash](#) in the Kakuma refugee camp in August 2015. It was the first project of its kind in Kenya. The cash transfers are dubbed 'bamba chakula' (Swahili for "Get food") and help replace part of the refugees' monthly food ration. The system allows people to buy food that is not given at distribution centres such as meat, milk, fruits and vegetables. The cash is sent through mobile phone and can be used in selected food shops. Since January 2016, mobile cash transfers have also been introduced in Dadaab refugee camp. Together, Dadaab and Kakuma are home to nearly half a million refugees.



The Resilience Consortium made up of Concern Worldwide, Transparency International and Oxfam has received European Commission support to help 64 communities build their capacity to respond to emergencies such as droughts and advocate for better preparedness through their county leaders. They have also provided people in need, especially also women who have the responsibility of feeding their families, with cash to get them through these difficult times. In December 2016, Concern worldwide rolled out the emergency response cash transfers to help a selected 650 households in Marsabit County, cope with the ongoing drought.



Peace primary school in Kakuma is one of the schools that is benefiting from a programme from the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), to provide education and psychosocial support to child and adults affected by the conflict in South Sudan. With funding from the EU, LWF established ten accelerated learning programmes, in which, instead of taking eight years to complete primary education, the programme diverges from the regular curriculum and offers the older students a three year course after which they can join high school. Some of the students are in their 30s, having lost the opportunity to school in their younger years to war.

