



## DONOR UPDATE: SOMALIA SITUATION RESPONSE

JULY 2011

**Somalia** remains at the centre of **one of the worst humanitarian crises** today. It is estimated that a quarter of Somalia's population of 7.5 million has been uprooted by violence and drought. Conflict in South Central Somalia continues unabated, causing a great number of civilian casualties and massive displacement. This is compounded by one of the worst droughts in the last five years. The drought has destroyed crops, decimated livestock, and exhausted coping mechanisms, resulting in high food prices affecting the majority of Somalis.

In Somalia, many people have been **displaced multiple times**, in particular in the South Central region. Almost 41,000 people have been uprooted in Somalia during the first six months of 2011 alone, bringing the total number of internally displaced people (IDPs) to some 1.46 million. An effective humanitarian response to this situation has been hampered by reduced humanitarian space caused by insecurity and attempts by insurgents to impose restrictions on the delivery of aid in Mogadishu and other areas of the South Central region.

Despite these obstacles, however, aid agencies in Somalia are endeavouring to give assistance to people in need who live in accessible areas. **UNHCR** continues to lead interventions with its partners and to distribute emergency relief items to IDPs in Somalia. In 2011, 48,000 IDPs have benefited from emergency relief kits, 10,200 from temporary shelter projects, 10,000 IDPs from livelihoods efforts and 5,000 from protection interventions. Despite our best efforts, the humanitarian response is not adequate enough in view of the magnitude of the needs.

The dire situation in Somalia is forcing many to cross borders into neighbouring countries. **More than 220,000 Somalis** have been forced to flee or were uprooted in Somalia so far this year. In June alone, more than 55,000 people fled across the borders into Ethiopia and Kenya; three times the number of people who fled in May. The total number of Somali refugees in the region stands now at 715,000.

In **Ethiopia**, as of 30 June, more than 54,000 Somali refugees had arrived in the Dolo Ado region since the beginning of the year. This brings the total number of Somali refugees in Ethiopia to more than 135,000 (including some 76,000 in Dolo Ado) by the end of June.

UNHCR's original planning figure for new arrivals from Somalia was 10,000 for the entire year. If the current trend continues, due to the ongoing insecurity and drought inside Somalia, the projected number of new arrivals by the end of the year may reach up to 120,000 refugees.

The current level of arrivals is creating **enormous challenges** and has overstretched the capacity of the Government and UNHCR to screen and register new arrivals. Some 23,000 refugees have arrived in June alone, creating bottlenecks in a registration system designed for 3,000 people per month. The transit centre is overcrowded with approximately 10,000 people in a space designed for 3,900. The pre-influx standard duration for transferring a refugee to the camps was within 72 hours, but this has been impossible to maintain. There are long delays in the reception centre, and extensive overcrowding is straining the already precarious facilities.

Refugees are arriving in **a very poor state of health**, dehydrated and severely undernourished, in particular the children. This situation is more acute due to delays in access to food and basic health services. The need for nutritional screening and food support has increased beyond what the planned 2011 resources are able to provide. The situation has seriously affected UNHCR's capacity to provide **sufficient protection arrangements for vulnerable refugees**, in particular for unaccompanied minors.

The two existing camps in Dolo Ado - Bokolmanyo and Melkadida - each have an extended capacity of 30,000, but are now operating beyond their limits. Each camp currently hosts about 38,000 Somali refugees. Even before the large influx of new arrivals, basic services in these camps were **insufficient to meet minimum standards**. The rapid influx has worsened the situation. Given current demand, existing services and facilities are proving more inadequate than ever, even for the most basic life saving activities.

**Water shortage** is a serious challenge at the pre-registration and transit centre and at the Bokolmanyo and Melkadida camps. The situation is particularly severe in Bokolmanyo where there is full dependence on water being brought in by truck. The refugees are surviving on an average of 9 - 10 litres per person per day with regular breaks in supply. Therapeutic feeding centres in the camps are also reporting **an alarming level of malnutrition** among children. The level of malnutrition is even higher at the pre-registration and transit centre where 50% of the under 5 children are severely malnourished. The prevalence of anaemia among the new arrivals is also alarmingly high, affecting 55.5% of the children under five years old in the existing camps. The mortality rate is five times higher than acceptable under international standards at 4.04 deaths per 1,000 children younger than 5 years in the camps and this rate is significantly higher at the pre-registration and transit centre.

Considering the pressing needs, **a third refugee camp** was opened at Kobe in Dolo Ado on 24 June 2011. UNHCR in collaboration with its government counterpart and implementing partners is working to ensure that essential infrastructure and supplies are available. Every effort is being undertaken to reduce overcrowding in the pre-registration and transit centre, as well as in the camps, however, additional resources are urgently required. Upon relocating refugees currently awaiting transfer at the pre-registration and transit centre to Kobe camp, the newly opened camp will have reached its maximum holding capacity of 20,000 individuals. The site for **a fourth camp** (Halewen) has already been identified to address the growing influx.

UNHCR has already made USD 2.9 million available from internal reserve mechanisms to respond to the most serious needs, including engaging implementing partners, finalizing the opening of Kobe camp, preparatory activities for the fourth camp, procuring non-food items and strengthening health and nutrition services.

UNHCR is providing hot meals to newly arriving refugees, setting up emergency education, ensuring logistics and provision of water through trucking, and reinforcing the screening and registration process at the pre-registration and transit centre in order to improve assistance to the arrivals.

Addressing the **nutritional emergency** and **preventing a humanitarian catastrophe** is now UNHCR's main priority. In addition to medical personnel, nutrition items such as "plumpy nuts" and Famix are urgently needed. The main challenge has been to receive and rapidly stabilize people arriving in extremely poor health condition from the drought-affected areas.

Some 6,000 tents are also needed immediately for the refugees already on ground. This will be complemented by the **local fabrication of shelters** that are more suited to the Dolo Ado environment and more durable than tents. Non-food items for 30,000 people are also being dispatched from stocks in Djibouti and from UNHCR's Central Emergency Stockpile.

Two **nutrition experts** have been deployed to assess the situation and identify an adequate response strategy. Additional screening and registration staff have been deployed to speed up the processing at pre-registration and transit centre and reduce the length of stay to a minimum. An Emergency Response Team (ERT) of five international staff has also been identified and will be deployed this week. The ERT is composed of: Field/Logistics Officer (through the NRC deployment scheme), Public Health Officer (through the DRC deployment scheme), Community Service Officer, Field/Protection Officer and a Site Planner.

In **Kenya**, UNHCR has also seen a significant increase in new arrivals, in particular to the north-eastern area of Dadaab. By the end of June, some 79,000 refugees and asylum-seekers had arrived in Kenya since the beginning of 2011. In the month of June alone, **more than 31,000** refugees arrived from Somalia. UNHCR's planning figures of new arrivals from Somalia for 2011 stood at 130,000 refugees.

As in Ethiopia, refugees are arriving in an **extremely poor condition** from insecure and drought-ridden areas inside Somalia. Some 55% of the children are admitted to feeding centres for malnourishment immediately upon arrival, compared to 10% in December 2010. Mortality rates for children under 5 years have increased sharply, from 0.24 per 1,000 per month to between 0.6-0.8 per 1,000 per month, which is three to four times the December 2010 rate. **Global acute malnutrition** rates are currently at 15% compared to 7.8% in December 2010.

The **Dadaab camps**, which were designed to host a total of 90,000 refugees, now accommodate more than **400,000 people**, over four times the original capacity, and the numbers are rising. UNHCR has continued to appeal to the Government of Kenya to allow the Office to relocate refugees to the Ifo extension in Dadaab and to the Kambioos site in Fafi. An allocation of additional land is essential to respond effectively to existing and expected needs. There are indications from the Government that they are considering these requests.

Tensions due to the **current overcrowding** in the camps became evident during the last week of June, when a serious disturbance flared up in the Dagahley section of the Dadaab camp complex, with refugees protesting against an attempt by the police to demolish illegal structures around a food distribution point; this regrettably resulted in the loss of life.

To respond effectively to the large number of new arrivals, the Government of Kenya, UNHCR, WFP and partners have begun to implement an **emergency response strategy**. The strategy aims to ensure a timely protection and assistance response to newly arriving refugees. **Vulnerability centres** are being established in all three camps to offer assistance within 24-hours of arrival to extremely vulnerable people. The strategy will boost reception/registration, primary health care and feeding centres for vulnerable refugees and people with special needs.

The slow registration of new arrivals remains one of the main protection-related challenges, increasing in particular the risk of sexual and gender-based violence. The strategy allows for **quickly scaling up reception and registration capacity**; provision of water and high-energy biscuits; administering emergency primary health care (including vulnerability assessment, medical screening, immunization, healthcare and feeding); and the distribution of food rations by WFP.

Thus far, UNHCR has been able to respond to the needs of new arrivals within its 2011 planned programme. However, the resources received by UNHCR for its operation in Kenya are insufficient to meet the needs of the growing number of arrivals, which is expected to continue. Based on the current trend, it is expected the number of **Somali refugees will exceed the 130,000 planning figure** for new arrivals for 2011. While the Office is now in the process to reprioritize activities and resources for emergency assistance, it is becoming clear that additional donor support is required to meet the immediate challenges in this operation.

These include: (i) further reinforcing reception, screening and registration capacity; (ii) provision of water, sanitation, emergency/therapeutic feeding and nutrition, essential personal and domestic items (jerry cans, blankets, sleeping mats, sanitary pads & kitchen sets), energy-efficient stoves, firewood, temporary shelter and site planning; (iii) provision for emergency health interventions, strengthening of special feeding of malnourished refugees, facilitating access to primary health care, hygiene and education services; (iv) targeted assistance to extremely vulnerable individuals (single women, children, unaccompanied or separated children); (v) protection monitoring along border entry points, camps and camp outskirts, with special attention to women and children, as well as the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence; and (vi) reinforcing community policing, public safety and security in camps and outskirts.

Somali refugees also continue to arrive in **Djibouti** in relatively large numbers, although at a lower rate than in Ethiopia and Kenya. From January to end of June 2011, UNHCR registered a total of over 2,600 new arrivals. Arrivals are in the range of **some 500 refugees per month**. It is expected that over 5,000 Somalis will arrive in Djibouti this year, more than double UNHCR's planning figure for 2011, which stood at 2,300.

The total number of Somali refugees in Djibouti stands currently at some 17,000, of whom **70 % are women and children**. The majority of the refugees (85%) live in Ali Addeh camp where they receive humanitarian assistance. The camp was constructed to host some 7,000 refugees. With the ongoing increase of the refugee population, however, it has now by far exceeded its capacity, resulting in tremendous pressure on services and infrastructure.

UNHCR is expecting that the total refugee population in Djibouti may go up to some 20,800 people at the end of 2011. It is evident that Somalis will continue to flee to neighbouring countries in the region. The Government of Djibouti has allocated the **former refugee site of Holl Holl** to UNHCR for rehabilitation in order to decongest Ali Addeh and host the new arrivals.

*For more information please visit [www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org) or contact UNHCR's Donor Relations and Resource Mobilization Service at [HQFR00@unhcr.org](mailto:HQFR00@unhcr.org)*





As a matter of urgency UNHCR has started the rehabilitation of Holl Holl. The **first transfers** to the site are expected to start in the course of July, as basic facilities are being completed. Ensuring the provision of sufficient quantities of water remains a challenge and is compounded by the drought currently affecting the region. **The rehabilitation of infrastructure** at Holl-Holl and the creation of services to render the camp operational again are crucial to providing protection and basic assistance to the refugees.

**Urgent funding** is required to render Holl Holl fully operational and deliver services that meet basic standards, offering better protection standards and living conditions to the refugees, including, shelter, water, healthcare, sanitation, education and livelihoods opportunities. All new arrivals will be hosted at Holl Holl and ten thousand refugees will be relocated from Ali Addeh to the new site.

In **Yemen**, the number of Somali arrivals since the beginning of 2011 has also increased despite the current political unrest in that country. Some 43,000 arrivals were recorded in 2011 by UNHCR until the end June, compared to 21,600 during the same period in 2010. At least 4,000 refugees in Sana'a are now seeking protection and relocation to a temporary refugee camp or any other safe place because of the civil unrest and increased prices for water, gas, food and transport. UNHCR transferred some 150 refugee families to the Kharaz camp, and identified buildings in Hodeida or outside Sana'a where they can be accommodated on a temporary basis.

UNHCR also initiated consultations with Government of Yemen, UN and other partners to develop **a contingency plan** that will guide the overall response to the evolving situation. UNHCR is planning a response for up to 40,000 refugee arrivals in the South. In the urban areas of Basateen and Sana'a, the priorities are cash assistance, healthcare, registration/documentation, follow-up on SGBV, and communication with persons of concern. In Kharaz camp and reception centres (Mayfaa, Ahwar) the priority is to increase assistance. More funding is required for non-food items, shelter, fuel, water; and transportation.

OPERATION	2011 PLANNING FIGURES FOR SOMALI ARRIVALS	ARRIVALS AT 30 JUNE 2011	TOTAL POPULATION AT 30 JUNE 2011
Somalia (IDPs)	120,000	41,000	1,460,000
Ethiopia	10,000	54,200	135,000
Kenya	130,000	79,000	430,000
Djibouti	2,300	2,600	17,000
Yemen	30,000	43,000	189,000