



More than 1,500 refugees – at least 80 percent of them children – are arriving at refugee camps in Kenya daily as a result of a widespread food crisis.

Food Crisis in the Horn of Africa: CARE Emergency Fund Seeks \$48 million

Overview

The worst humanitarian crisis in the world today continues to escalate in the Horn of Africa, where more than 11 million people are now in acute need of food assistance. CARE and other humanitarian agencies are working around the clock to respond, as a United Nations declaration of famine in parts of southern Somalia underscores the urgency of the situation. The crisis extends across parts of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda, with the concern that famine could spread. Some areas in the region are experiencing their worst drought in 60 years, with no chance of improvement until at least next year.

Seasonal rains have failed for the past two or three years, hitting hard in communities already severely affected by poverty, climate change, conflict, and skyrocketing food and fuel prices. Many very poor people, including pastoralists



CARE supplies food, water and sanitation to the world's largest refugee camp, in Dadaab, Kenya (indicated by the red dot).

whose herds have been devastated by drought, have been forced to sell their few assets in order to buy food.

The Dadaab refugee camps

Nearly 1,500 refugees a day are pouring into the remote Dadaab refugee camps in Kenya, created in 1991 to meet the needs of refugees from war-torn Somalia. Now the world's largest refugee site, Dadaab is massively overcrowded with more than 384,000 displaced people in three camps originally designed for 90,000.

"All of our cattle and goats died because of drought, and our crops failed due to lack of rain. We spent all the little resources we had. Seeing our children crying, and me having no breast milk for my baby, my husband decided to take the little money of our savings and come to Dadaab."

– Asli, who walked five days from Somalia with her five children, ages 3 months to 4 years

The majority of people arriving in Dadaab are women and children, mainly farmers and animal herders forced to flee drought conditions and a deteriorating security situation in southwestern Somalia. Malnutrition rates among arriving Somali children under age 5 are at least 30 percent.

CARE has worked in Dadaab since 1992 and is the primary provider of basic services including food, water and sanitation. In cooperation with U.N. agencies, we are rushing to increase distributions to new arrivals, but the pipeline of aid available through the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) is expected to run dry by September.

The U.N. refugee agency UNHCR is negotiating with Kenyan authorities over the allocation of additional land to help decongest the Dadaab camps. The Kenyan government has authorized the immediate opening of a fourth camp, and CARE stands ready to expand our provision of food, water and emergency assistance at this new facility.

CARE's Response



CARE is providing enough water to meet the daily needs of 446,000 refugees.

Our immediate efforts include safe water, sanitation, and emergency aid to newly arrived refugees in Dadaab. Individuals, especially children, who are suffering from malnutrition and medical problems are referred to supplementary and therapeutic feeding programs and stabilization units. Families are provided with emergency rations while awaiting access to general food distributions. For those who are in spontaneous settlements outside the perimeter of the official camps, the humanitarian community is planning improvements including safe water and sanitation, improved security, and access to health services and emergency shelter.

Specific examples of CARE's immediate response **in the Dadaab refugee camps** include:

- **Water, sanitation and hygiene:** To meet the needs for water of existing and new refugees, CARE is increasing the production from our borehole wells at the camps. Our current capacity can supply 446,000 people with about 15 liters of water per person per day. Collapsible water bladders and tanker trucks are being used to supply water to people outside the main camp areas.
- **Public health promotion:** To reduce the risk of disease under crowded conditions, CARE is increasing hygiene promotion activities, and dispatching staff and volunteer committees to educate households about hand-washing, safe disposal of human waste and safe water handling. In partnership with other agencies, we provide supplies including soap and jerry cans for collecting and storing water.



A woman waits with her child for treatment at a therapeutic feeding center.

- **Food security:** To ensure that new refugees have food while they await registration, CARE and WFP have increased the emergency rations distributed immediately upon arrival. Each family now receives enough wheat flour, cornmeal, beans, oil, sugar, salt and corn-soy blend to last for 21 days. In addition, we provide other essential items such as plastic sheets, bed mats, kitchen and eating sets, blankets and buckets.
 - **Education:** CARE is committed to helping children uprooted by the crisis resume learning and a sense of normalcy as quickly as possible. Camp schools are overwhelmed by the rapid influx of new learners. CARE's education program in the Dagahaley camp, which serves about 15,000 students, has admitted 2,895 new children since January; many classes now take place outdoors for lack of space. We estimate that as many as 8,000 primary school-aged children in the arrival area are not in school. Funding is critically needed for additional emergency classrooms, as well as facilities such as water supply and latrines.
- **Gender-based violence and psychosocial support:** Many women and children make the treacherous journey in search of help without men, and are vulnerable to violence including rape and abduction. Reported cases of sexual and gender-based violence have doubled since last year. Through our Stay Safe campaign, CARE provides information on how to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence. We also offer counseling to help refugees cope with trauma including death or separation from family members, violence and social isolation.

Along with helping meet the acute needs of refugees, CARE is continuing our ongoing interventions reaching **those remaining at home** in some of the worst-affected countries:

- In **Ethiopia**, CARE is scaling up our emergency response to provide 855,000 people with food assistance; nutrition; water, sanitation and hygiene; and support to livelihoods including

agriculture and livestock. Our ongoing work has reached more than 241,000 people in the Afar and Oromia regions – where we also provide services to help pastoralists keep their livestock healthy. In West Hararghe, where CARE has worked for 25 years both on emergency and development activities, the number of people we are serving has jumped by 28,000 from the beginning of the crisis to 135,240, who are mostly in need of food aid.

- In **Somalia**, CARE has assisted 164,000 people in the northern regions of Puntland and Somaliland with drought relief activities and cash interventions to help families buy food, and we are increasing our response to help as many people as possible. We are working to scale up our lifesaving interventions in water, sanitation, food and nutrition, and to help build sustainability in a country where more than half the population is considered in need of humanitarian assistance.
- In **Kenya**, in addition to our work serving the 376,000 residents of the Dadaab camps, in the coming weeks CARE plans to scale up to reach an additional 200,000 people in the country's hard-hit northeast. We have already assisted 167,000 people in the region, where we support water resource management, veterinary care, livelihood diversification and locally owned disaster risk management.

"The declaration of famine is an urgent plea for these people. It is the most critical thing I've seen in 22 years of field experience. Everyone I met had the same message: 'Please tell the world for us that we need help, and that we need it now. We cannot last much longer.'"

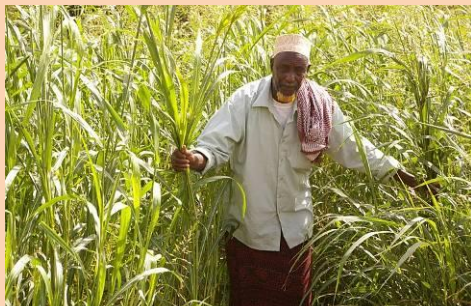
– Barbara Jackson, CARE Humanitarian Director

Funding needs

In order to scale up our response to reach nearly two million people affected by the emergency in Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya CARE has created the Horn of Africa Emergency Fund and is seeking generous contributions totaling \$48 million.

Long-term Strategy

CARE's long-term strategy includes the five-year Adaption Learning Program in Kenya, which helps vulnerable people develop new livelihood skills to cope with a changing climate. CARE works with traditional pastoralists like Abdullahi Gedi, 74, who have been forced to abandon their traditional herding lifestyle and face the difficult transition to farming as their main way to make a living.



The current food crisis is related to longer-term issues facing the Horn of Africa, where even under normal circumstances malnutrition rates for children are as high as 25 percent. In countries across the region, CARE works to address underlying causes of poverty that drive chronic food insecurity. Much of our work focuses on helping communities develop resilience in the face of future shocks, through disaster risk management, careful stewardship of natural resources, development of marketing and business management skills, and diversification of livelihoods.

With more than 65 years of experience in emergency relief, CARE continues our commitment to meeting the immediate needs of people in crisis. We are equally dedicated to helping communities prepare for and avoid future crises. The reasons for chronic food insecurity in

the Horn of Africa include deep poverty, social injustice, climate change and conflict. With the help of our supporters, CARE is determined to tackle these issues once and for all, to break the deadly cycle of recurring food crises.

Conclusion

The people of the Horn of Africa have long struggled against enormous odds to feed their families – but their suffering has reached new levels in the face of crippling droughts. CARE stands ready to meet the most urgent needs, including those of hungry people streaming into the world's largest refugee camp. At the same time, we will continue our commitment to finding long-term solutions to poverty and food insecurity so even the poorest communities can stand on their own. We thank you for considering a generous gift in support of this vital mission.

July 2011