

Current major event

Horn of Africa drought: Increased health risks in the Greater Horn of Africa

Millions of people in the Greater Horn of Africa are at risk of starvation as most of the countries in the region face food insecurity not seen in decades. WHO and other partners are responding to the looming health crisis through ensuring access to basic health services and providing treatment for severe malnutrition. Besides, detecting, preventing and responding to potential disease outbreaks.

Editorial note

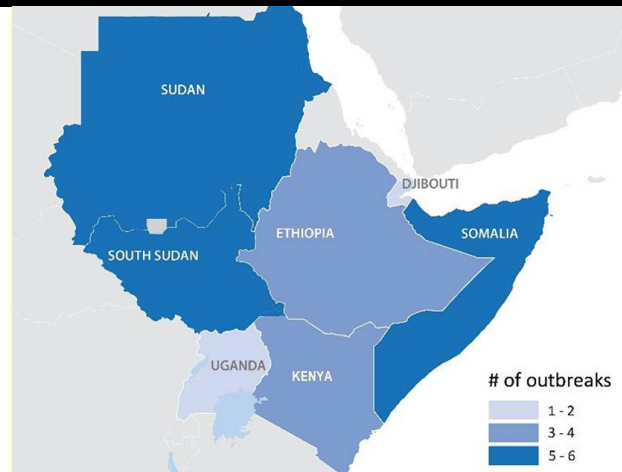
There are 300 million people living in the Greater Horn of Africa (GHOA) region and 7 countries including, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda are currently facing one of the worst droughts in the recent decades. The GHOA region is facing a major humanitarian crisis with millions of people are at risk of starvation due to rising food insecurity not seen in decades. The major drivers of the situation are intensifying conflict and instability, extreme climate events, prolong drought, impact of COVID-19, economic shocks, and food insecurity.

Conflict and insecurity in the region continue to displace people, disrupt livelihoods and constrain the delivery of humanitarian and other essential services. There are an estimated 4.3 million refugees and asylum seekers in the region, of which the majority were displaced by conflict. Another 11.1 million are internally displaced. (See table)

Four consecutive rainy seasons have failed, a climatic event not seen in at least 40 years. The March–May rainy season in the Horn of Africa was the driest on record in the last 70 years. The latest forecasts suggest that there is a risk that the next rainy season could also fail. Increase in global hunger has exacerbated economic inequalities across and within countries, with unrecovered income losses among those most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 60 million people are facing food insecurity with close to 30 million people not consuming enough food and having high levels of malnutrition. Also, more than 7.3 million people are in an emergency state where people are facing extreme food shortages.

Increased health risks

In GHOA region, acute malnutrition is high children and pregnant and breastfeeding women are especially vulnerable. More than 11 million children under the age of 5 years are estimated to be facing acute malnutrition. Six countries (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan) are dealing with outbreaks of measles. Cholera cases have been detected in Somalia, South Sudan, and Kenya. All seven countries in the region are malaria-endemic countries with significant increases in cases across the region (except Somalia). Sudan and South Sudan are witnessing cases of meningitis. There are yellow fever outbreaks in Kenya, Sudan and Uganda. COVID-19 vaccination coverage is










Number of reported outbreaks of epidemic prone disease (as of 18th August 2022)

Source:

<https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/situation-report-greater-horn-of-africa-drought-and-food-insecurity-18-august-2022>

Key figures

	Est. Population (GHOA)	294 M
	Acute Food Insecure Pop. (IPC2 or higher)	> 80 M
	COVID-19 Cases / Fatalities (24 June 2022)	1.12 M / 23K
	COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage (24 June 2022)	61.8 M
	Est. Malaria Cases (2020) (Global Malaria Rep, 2021)	27.2M
	Number of Refugees (UNHCR, 2022)	4.2 M
	Internally Displaced (UNHCR, 2022)	11.1 M

below 50% for all countries. Vaccine derived poliovirus type 2 is circulating in the region with about 180 suspected cases of acute flaccid paralysis reported in Somalia since the beginning of the year and Ethiopia has reported 14 suspected cases. Monkeypox cases have been reported in Sudan (West Darfur). Hepatitis E outbreaks are ongoing in Sudan and in IDP camps in South Sudan (See map). There is decreased access to already limited health services and vaccination coverage is low in many countries in the region.

WHO is working with partners to identify and mitigate nutrition and health risks to prevent malnutrition, morbidity and mortality. WHO is ensuring that severely malnourished children who are sick get the care they need; life-saving supplies of drugs and equipment are available; detection and response to outbreaks of diseases like measles, cholera and meningitis occurs without any delay; and gaps in access to health care are identified and addressed.

Further action is required to enhance coordination, strengthen surveillance to support decision making, increase efforts for outbreak prevention and control, increase integration and availability of essential Nutrition Actions, and to strengthen health systems to scale-up essential health service to respond to the increased risks, needs, barriers to access.

Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

COVID-19 in 22 EMR countries

Current public health events of concern

[cumulative N° of cases (deaths), CFR %]

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): 2019-2022

Afghanistan	[194 163 (7782), 4%]
Bahrain	[672 245 (1515), 0.2%]
Djibouti	[15 690 (189), 1.2%]
Egypt	[515 335 (24 796), 4.8%]
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	[7 531 924 (143 947) 1.9%]
Iraq	[2 458 509 (25 348), 1%]
Jordan	[1 738 867 (14 114), 0.8%]
Kuwait	[657 745 (2563), 0.4%]
Lebanon	[1 210 566 (10 636), 0.9%]
Libya	[506 849 (6437), 1.3%]
Morocco	[1 264 531 (16 274), 1.3%]
occupied Palestinian territory (oPt)	[702 591 (5706), 0.8%]
Oman	[397 993 (4628), 1.2%]
Pakistan	[1 570 016 (30 591), 1.9%]
Qatar	[430 945 (681), 0.2%]
Saudi Arabia	[813 682 (9302) 1.1%]
Somalia	[27 197 (1361), 5%]
Sudan	[63 266 (4961), 7.8%]
Syrian Arab Republic	[57 072 (3163), 5.5%]
Tunisia	[1 144 824 (29 238), 2.6%]
United Arab Emirates	[1 016 745 (2341), 0.2%]
Yemen	[11 926 (2155), 18.1%]