



World Food Programme

SAVING
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LIVES

WFP Eastern Africa

Emergency Preparedness and Response

Regional outlook and 2020 Achievements



Responding to Emergencies in Eastern Africa

Overview

WFP's emergency preparedness and response has remained a critical function since its founding in 1961. Wherever disasters hit, whether man-made or natural, sudden, or protracted, the organization works with governments and key stakeholders to save and change lives of populations that are most at risk of food insecurity through humanitarian coordination, relief, resilience, and capacity strengthening efforts. WFP is also investing in the nexus discussions and engaging conflict sensitivity in her strategic programming.

June 2021

Over the years, Eastern Africa has experienced below average rainfall and delayed seasonal rains, resulting in drought and famine across the region. In addition, the region has had to contend with conflict and insecurity, flooding, desert locust invasion, and diseases such as Ebola and COVID-19. These disasters have continued to disrupt the lives and livelihoods of populations in the region, increasing the number of the food insecure people and malnourished children in the region

In response, WFP together with governments, UN agencies and other partners continue to prepare for and respond to avert regional food and nutrition crises while following an accountability, inclusion and do no harm approach. In the period 2018-2020 conflict and insecurity remained the number one driver of need in Eastern Africa accounting for 73 percent of WFP response followed by natural hazards at 19 percent and socio-economic and other shocks at 8 percent¹. In 2020 the region hosted up to 4.4 million refugees and 8.1 million IDPs with a majority of these resulting from conflict and insecurity. Uganda and Sudan

hosted the highest number of refugees at 1.4 million and 1 million respectively, Ethiopia's Tigray crisis increased the number of IDPs in the country that hit 1.85 million by December 2020. Somalia continues to lead in the number of IDPs at 2.65 million as of December 2020. WFP together with partners continue to advocate for more resources. Reduced funding has led to ration cuts of 16-to 60 percent in refugee response in Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, Djibouti, and Rwanda.

WFP has also continued to support 33.3 million food insecure residents in Food Insecurity Phase Classification (IPC) 3 and above affected by previous droughts, locust invasion and conflict, through general food distribution and livelihood interventions.

WFP and partners adapted programme implementation to the government COVID-19 protocols while supporting Government interventions in support of populations impacted by the economic impact of COVID-19 especially in urban set ups.

More funding is needed to support refugee operations

WFP reached over **3 million refugees and 4 million IDPs** in the Eastern Africa region.

Due to funding constraints, WFP has been compelled to implement ration cuts for refugees in South Sudan (50 percent), Uganda (40 percent), Kenya (40 percent), Djibouti (23 percent), Ethiopia (16 percent) and Rwanda (8 percent), affecting 72 percent of the refugee population in the region. This has resulted in growing risks for the refugees, including increased malnutrition and anaemia, stunted growth of children and a myriad of protection risks.

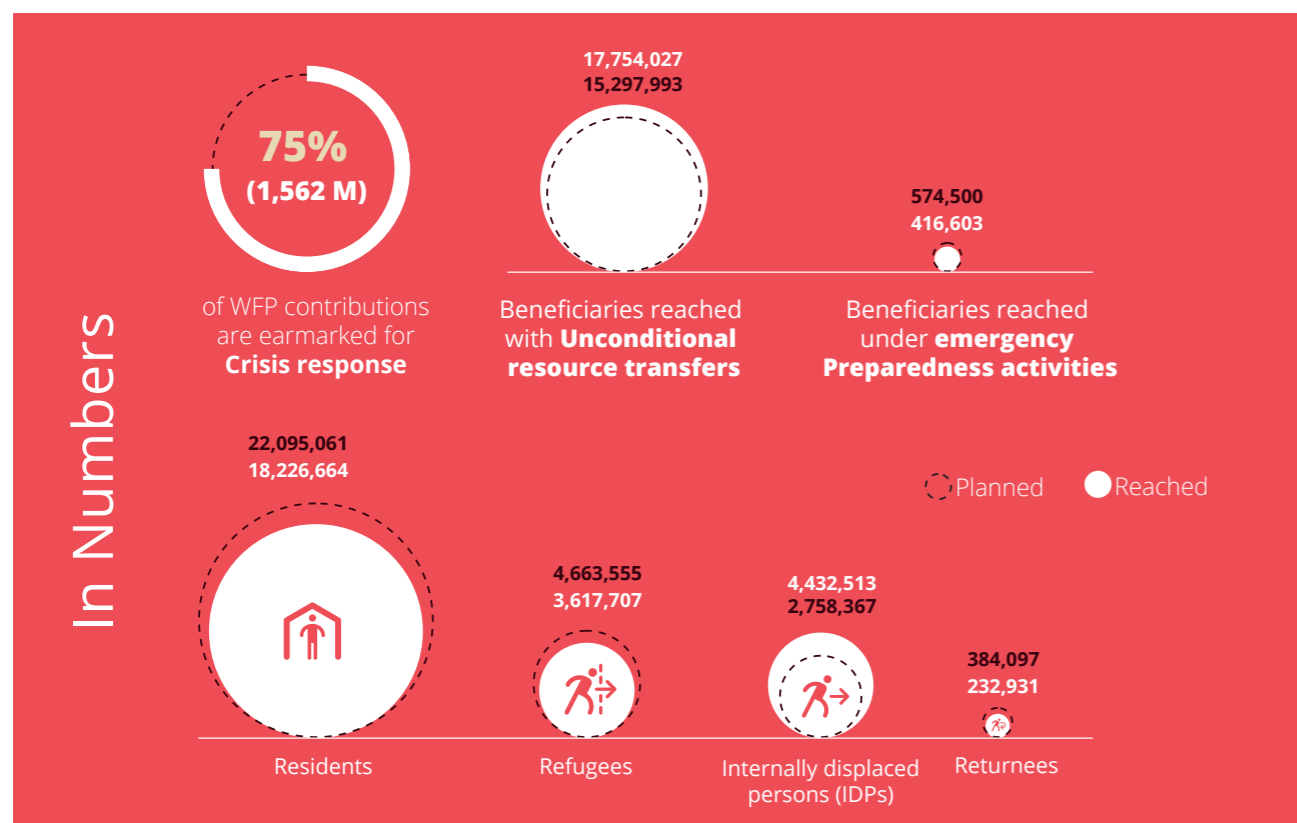
Funding constraints for the refugee humanitarian response is undermining gains made by the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) within the region, which was established on the understanding that while immediate 'life-saving' needs of refugees are met, host governments and development partners will support the integration of refugees in local economies and extend their access to services such as health and education.



Refugee self-reliance

WFP in collaboration with UNHCR, FAO and the Turkana County Government contributed to the self-reliance and integration of refugee and host community populations. WFP supported development of agriculture infrastructure, horticultural farms and water harvesting structures. Farmers produced an average of 4.5 mt of vegetables and fruit. Findings indicate that participants in self-reliance activities in Kalobeyei showed significantly lower levels of poor food consumption, and in particular, women-headed households seemed to benefit. Besides in Kalobeyei, 29 percent of self-reliance activity participants reported agriculture as a source of income compared to 3.7 percent for non-participants.

In Ethiopia; Gambella and Somali regions, WFP supported with agriculture production, agro-processing, market strengthening and access to financial services. This led to an improvement in the consumption of sufficient food compared to the baseline of 48 percent in July 2018. In Uganda, WFP expanded its asset creation and livelihoods (ACL) interventions from two districts in 2019, to three refugee hosting districts (Adjumani, Lamwo and Isingiro). As a result WFP facilitated the building of 16 food storage facilities. In partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, WFP constructed two valley dams in Isingiro to address water scarcity challenges during prolonged dry seasons.



COVID -19 Response and programme adjustments

The outbreak of COVID-19 in the region was an unprecedented social, economic and governance shock for the region, with direct and indirect impacts on food and nutrition security, health, education, gender, and social protection.

Government response: To contain the spread, governments implemented containment measures, including lockdowns and closure of international borders which exacerbated the existing vulnerabilities such as poverty, inequality, climate change, weak private sector investment and vulnerability of the economy to internal and external shocks.

WFP response: To supplement government efforts in mitigating the impacts of the pandemic, WFP launched cash transfers and nutrition support for millions of vulnerable people struggling to survive the impact of COVID-19 in the region (in Kenya).

WFP adjusted its programmes, integrating COVID-19 risk mitigation measures such as providing packaged the food entitlements, switching monthly food distributions to bi-monthly distributions to avoid crowd gatherings, using contactless SCOPE cards, installing hygiene equipment at distribution sites and schools to protect beneficiaries and staff from contracting the disease.

To keep itself and stakeholders abreast of beneficiaries' experiences, WFP used technology-based monitoring approach to monitor programmes in the context of COVID-19 and in areas with restricted access.



Desert locust infestation in East Africa

In 2020, swarms of desert locusts hit East Africa and spread across the countries in the region wreaking havoc as they descended on crops, vegetation, and pasturelands, threatening the food security and livelihoods of millions of people. The 2020 upsurge, which started in 2019, affected Kenya, Somalia, and Ethiopia. Others were Djibouti, Eritrea, Sudan, and South Sudan, etc. Considered the most destructive migratory pests in the world, they affected hundreds of thousands of hectares, including cropland and pasture.

Government response: The governments in partnership with FAO and the Desert Locust Organisation established high surveillance and preparedness through aerial and ground spraying, consequently averting loss of million tonnes of food in countries already hard hit by acute food insecurity and poverty and where many were already hungry.

WFP response: WFP supported food security assessments in the region to quantify the impact the locusts on food production and availability. Support to affected communities included a combination of emergency assistance, social protection, and livelihood interventions.

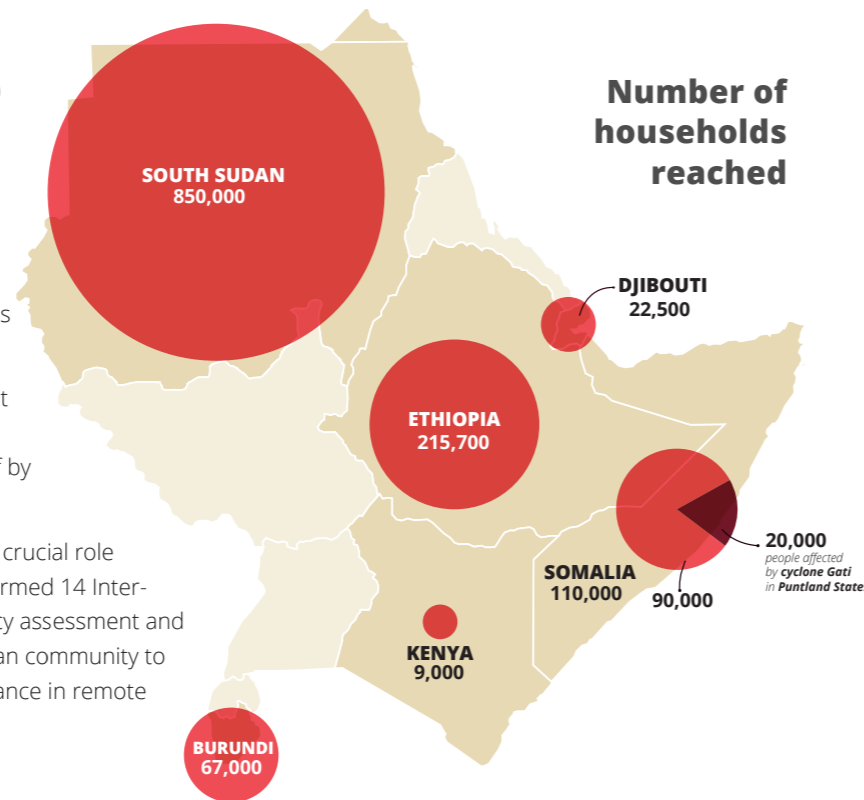
While not directly part of locust control operations which were led by FAO, WFP assisted the affected populations and governments through: i) providing nutrition support and building the resilience of small-scale farmers (in Kenya and Somalia); ii) providing emergency cash assistance to the affected people in locust-affected regions (in Somalia); iii) helping affected households to create assets to build resilience (in Djibouti); iv) providing cash-based transfers to vulnerable people in locust-affected areas (in Somalia); and v) providing vehicles to governments to monitor swarms.



Enabling communities to cope with Climatic shocks

Flood response

- Through its Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) programme, beneficiaries in Somalia and South Sudan received food assistance for the construction of earth dams and flood protection dikes.
- WFP supported the Government of Somalia to conduct a post-flooding impact and needs assessment.
- In Kenya, WFP, on behalf, of the Government provided food assistance to households affected by airlifting food to locations cut off by floods.
- In South Sudan, UNHAS continued to play a crucial role in emergency response providing and performed 14 Inter-Cluster Coordination Group flood emergency assessment and response missions enabling the humanitarian community to reach flood-affected people with vital assistance in remote areas



Drought response

- WFP supported the Government of Kenya to conduct an after-action review of preparedness and response to droughts in 2016-2019 with the goal to improve future drought preparedness and response interventions
- In Ethiopia, WFP provided inland transportation services to FAO for the distribution of animal feed as part of an emergency response in drought-hit Somali Region.
- To strengthen make vulnerable rural households become more resilient to frequent and intense climate-related drought shocks, WFP implemented climate risk management activities through the Rural Resilience Initiative (R4) and Satellite Index Insurance for Pastoralists in Ethiopia (SIPE) across the Amhara, Somali and Tigray regions. This aimed to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable rural households for them to better cope with frequent and intense climate-related drought shocks.



Contact Information

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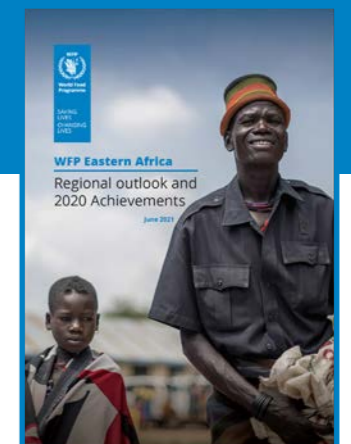
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Endnotes

1 Scoping Study: Drivers of Crisis and WFP Interventions in Eastern Africa



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