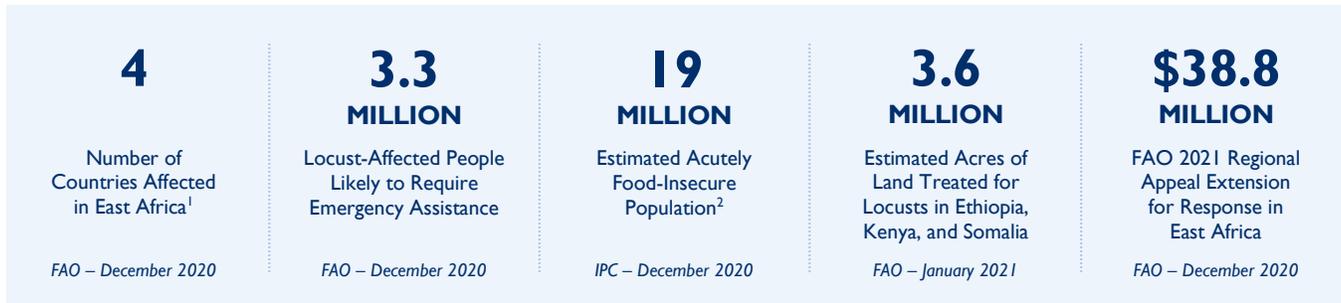


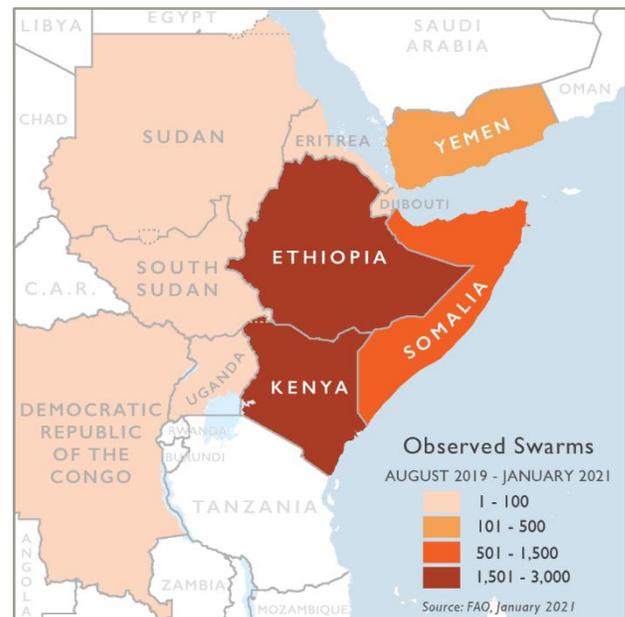
# East Africa – Desert Locust Crisis

FEBRUARY 1, 2021

## SITUATION AT A GLANCE



- Swarms that formed in eastern Ethiopia and central Somalia have been migrating to southern Ethiopia and northern Kenya since December.
- Locusts continue to breed along the Red Sea coastal areas and in northern Somalia.
- Two USAID/BHA-contracted spray aircraft have treated nearly 175,700 acres of locust infested areas since November and have been redeployed to southern Ethiopia for additional operations.
- Control operations have prevented 2.9 million metric tons (MT) of crop loss at harvest time since January 2020, safeguarding the food security of 19.6 million people and protecting grazing areas for the livestock of 1.4 million households.



### TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN FUNDING

For the East Africa Desert Locust Crisis Response in FYs 2020–2021

USAID/BHA<sup>3</sup> \$25,770,961

USAID/Uganda \$379,862

For complete funding breakdown with partners, see detailed chart on page <sup>5</sup>

**Total \$26,150,823**

<sup>1</sup> Figure includes East African countries included in the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)'s revised regional response plan as of late December: Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, and Sudan.

<sup>2</sup> Figure reflects combined estimates of populations in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, and Sudan currently experiencing Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) 3—Crisis—or higher levels of acute food insecurity. The IPC is a multi-partner initiative that developed a standardized scale to classify the severity and magnitude of food insecurity. The IPC scale, which is comparable across countries and time, ranges from Minimal—IPC 1—to Famine—IPC 5—for acute food insecurity.

<sup>3</sup> USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) funding includes non-food humanitarian assistance from the former Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance.

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

### Locust Swarms Migrate to Central and Northern Kenya, Southern Ethiopia

In December 2020 and January 2021, desert locust swarms migrated from breeding areas in eastern Ethiopia and central Somalia to southern Ethiopia and northern and central Kenya, according to FAO. While climatic conditions remain dry in these areas, anticipated rainfall in the coming months—following the onset of Kenya’s March-to-June long rains and Ethiopia’s March-to-May *belg/gu* rains—would provide favorable conditions for locusts to mature and begin breeding in northern Kenya and southern and southwestern Ethiopia in March and April, further threatening household food security and livelihoods through 2021.

In mid-January, desert locust swarms in Ethiopia shifted from the eastern Harari Highlands in Oromia Region to the southern Rift Valley in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples’ (SNNP) Region, where rainfall may advance their maturity. In recent weeks, some immature swarms had moved northeast into Afar and Amhara regions, presenting a risk of further migration into Tigray Region and potentially the Red Sea coasts of Eritrea and Saudi Arabia, where locust breeding is ongoing. Locust swarms also moved south across the Shebelle River in southeastern Ethiopia into the Juba River basin, subsequently crossing into prime rangeland for pastoral households’ livestock in northern Kenya.

Additional swarms remain scattered along the Ethiopia–Kenya border, FAO reports. In Kenya, immature swarms continue to migrate westward through northern and central parts of the country, with locusts reported in Garissa, Isiolo, Laikipia, Marsabit, Meru Central, Meru North, Samburu, Tana River, Tharaka, and Wajir counties. Additionally, scattered hopper bands continue to develop in southeastern Kenya’s Taita-Taveta County and along Kenya’s Indian Ocean coastline, where FAO expects swarms to form in the coming weeks.

Furthermore, in mid-January, several immature swarms migrated from coastal and highland areas of northern Yemen—where control operations are limited due to insecurity—to southwest Saudi Arabia. In Sudan, control efforts are ongoing against hopper bands and adult locust populations along the Atbara River and near the Sudan–Eritrea and Sudan–Egypt borders. Similarly, control operations continued against hopper bands and groups along the Red Sea coast in northern Eritrea and along much of the Red Sea coast in Saudi Arabia, according to FAO.

### Tropical Cyclone Gati Results in Increased Breeding in Northern Somalia

Heavy rainfall and flooding from Tropical Cyclone Gati, which made landfall over northern Somalia on November 22, 2020, produced ideal conditions for desert locust breeding in northern coastal areas of Somalia, FAO reports. Since December, atypically wet conditions from the storm contributed to unseasonal locust breeding, including a resurgence of locust infestations in northern Somalia’s semi-autonomous Puntland and Somaliland regions. Hatching and hopper band formation is ongoing along Somalia’s northwestern coast, on the northern plateau, and in the northeast, which will likely continue in the coming weeks, and FAO anticipates continued surveillance and control operations will be necessary into 2021. Furthermore, additional desert locust swarms could develop during February in northern Somalia, posing renewed threats to livelihoods and food security of vulnerable households, FAO reports. As of January 26, control teams in northern Somalia had access to one dual-purpose helicopter in Somaliland and one dual-purpose helicopter and one fixed-wing spraying aircraft in Puntland.

## **FAO Requests \$38.8 Million to Extend Locust Response in 2021**

FAO released a revised appeal for the Greater Horn of Africa and Yemen desert locust response on December 16, 2020, requesting an additional \$38.8 million to fund response efforts in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen from January to June 2021. The UN agency's initial appeal—requesting \$231.6 million—covered response efforts only through the end of 2020. The revised appeal calls for \$35.3 million to support surveillance and control efforts across the five countries, as well as \$3.5 million for livelihood recovery and support for locust-affected populations in Kenya; livelihoods interventions for the other four countries are included in their respective 2021 UN Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs), but there is no HRP planned for Kenya in 2021. While FAO anticipates the current desert locust upsurge to persist through at least mid-2021, the scale of the infestations will depend on both weather conditions and affected countries' capacity to detect and effectively control existing populations and likely new locust generations.

The appeal outlines expected needs and response priorities through June, and to inform strategic planning, FAO included projected food security impacts of the locust upsurge on households with existing vulnerabilities. In the five countries covered by the appeal, more than 35.2 million people will likely face Crisis—IPC 3—or worse levels of acute food insecurity from January to March, FAO reports. Despite ongoing control efforts, FAO reports significant desert locust-related crop damage in some areas, the effects of which could result in an estimated 3.6 million additional people experiencing Crisis or worse levels of acute food insecurity in Ethiopia, Somalia, Yemen, Sudan, and Kenya; however, more robust desert locust-related food security and livelihood assessments remain ongoing.

## **Overall Number of Households Experiencing Losses Due to Locusts Declines; Impacted Households Face High Crop and Pasture Losses**

According to a recent impact assessment by the Food Security and Nutrition Working Group—a regional platform for food security and nutrition analysis and coordination led by FAO—approximately one-third of farmer households and one-half of livestock-rearing households in areas affected by desert locust infestations experienced crop and pasture losses from October to December 2020 in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia. These figures represent an overall decrease from June and July in the percentage of households reporting desert locust-related losses in Ethiopia and Kenya, with mixed results in Somalia; however, nearly 70 percent of impacted households reported high losses to crops and pasture. Additionally, many impacted households anticipate upcoming harvests to be below-average and report that their livestock were in poor or fair conditions.

## **Desert Locust Response Teams Prevent 2.9 Million MT of Crop Loss in 2020**

From January to December 2020, control teams treated more than 3.6 million acres of land in East Africa and Yemen, preventing nearly 2.9 million MT of crop loss at harvest time—valued at approximately \$883.1 million, FAO reports. According to the UN agency, the interventions have safeguarded the food security of approximately 19.6 million people and protected grazing areas for the livestock of approximately 1.4 million pastoral households.

## KEY FIGURES



5

Countries receiving USAID support for desert locust control



7

Aircraft contracted with USAID/BHA support in three locust-affected countries



23

Vehicles deployed with USAID/BHA support in four locust-affected countries



**3.6 Million**

Acres of land treated in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia since January 2020

## U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

### SURVEILLANCE AND PEST CONTROL

Since late November 2020, two USAID/BHA-contracted aircraft have treated nearly 175,700 acres infested by desert locusts in Ethiopia. In early January, locust surveillance and response aircraft—including the two USAID/BHA-supported air assets—in Ethiopia repositioned from Somali Region to Oromia and SNNP. USAID/BHA, FAO, and other response actors are coordinating with Government of Ethiopia to maintain adequate stocks of pesticides to enable response operations conducted by air and ground assets.

USAID/BHA funding provides critical equipment—including aircraft and vehicles for surveillance and control—for response teams in locust-affected countries. In areas where launching aerial control operations remains challenging due to ongoing insecurity, USAID/BHA is supporting qualified locust control teams to conduct ground interventions using backpack and vehicle-mounted sprayers. USAID/BHA has also supported one plane and six helicopter deployments to reinforce surveillance and control capacity in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia. The plane enables control operations in Ethiopia to cover long distances and spray large expanses of land in a single flight. Meanwhile, the helicopters allow response teams to verify surveillance data and determine adequacy of control in hard-to-reach areas, including areas with rough, uneven terrain and with no airstrips—where planes are typically unable to land—and areas that are difficult to reach by ground transportation or on foot.

### RESPONSE CAPACITY-BUILDING AND EARLY WARNING

To strengthen local capacity to manage infestations, USAID/BHA is supporting training on locust monitoring, detection, and control, as well as the safe handling and use of pesticides and related environmental protection for government officials, locust scouts, and other response personnel. USAID/BHA is also supporting the provision of equipment, including GPS, radios, and eLocust3 tablets—which collect and transmit field data in real-time to government officials and FAO staff—to enable response personnel to forecast locust movements and impacts, and to provide early warnings to at-risk communities to help mobilize control operations in a timely manner.

The U.S. Government (USG) continues to support FAO and other stakeholders to improve locust monitoring and forecasting systems, enabling teams to strengthen preparedness and launch more timely and effective responses. USAID's Bureau for Resilience and Food Security—through SERVIR, a joint partnership with the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)—is bolstering FAO's global locust monitoring system, enabling the UN agency to identify targeted treatment areas by strengthening forecasting of breeding locations and swarm movements. In addition, the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Air Resources Laboratory has developed a locust forecasting web application at the request of FAO; the application generates a graphic

simulation of future swarm movements, based on weather and wind forecasts, which FAO uses to provide regular situation updates to the public.

## FOOD SECURITY

In response to extant humanitarian needs, USAID/BHA implementing partners continue to provide emergency food and nutrition assistance to vulnerable populations in East Africa, including in many locust-affected areas of the region. USAID/BHA partners also continue to monitor potential additional needs resulting from the impact of desert locust infestations.

### CONTEXT IN BRIEF

- The desert locust is one of the most destructive migratory pests in the world, rapidly consuming most vegetation in its path, including crops and pastureland critical to maintaining the food security and livelihoods of populations in East Africa. Locust swarms are highly mobile and carried on the wind; swarms can travel up to 100 miles per day, and even a relatively small, 0.4 square mile-sized swarm can consume an amount of food sufficient for approximately 35,000 people in one day.
- Desert locust swarms first crossed the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea from Yemen and entered Ethiopia and Somalia in June 2019. While desert locust infestations occur seasonally in parts of East Africa, above-average rainfall in the region from September to December 2019, as well as additional rains brought by Tropical Cyclone Pawan to eastern Somalia in early December, extended wet conditions conducive for breeding and generated abundant vegetation for the locusts to consume. Several successive generations of the pest formed multiple hopper bands and swarms of adult locusts, enabling several outbreaks to grow and develop into a regional upsurge, the second of three FAO levels classifying the scale of locust infestations, in late 2019.
- On November 18, 2019, U.S. Ambassador Michael A. Raynor declared a disaster due to the impact of desert locust infestations in Ethiopia. On February 19, 2020, U.S. Chargé d’Affaires Brian Neubert declared a disaster for desert locust-affected areas of Somalia, and on February 25, U.S. Ambassador Kyle McCarter issued a disaster declaration in Kenya due to the impacts of the pest across the country. U.S. Chargé d’Affaires Brian Shukan also declared a disaster due to the projected impact of uncontrolled infestations across Sudan on April 13. Given the continued proliferation of swarms throughout the country, Ambassador Raynor renewed the disaster declaration for Ethiopia on October 16, 2020.

### USAID HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE EAST AFRICA DESERT LOCUST RESPONSE IN FY 2021<sup>1</sup>

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
<b>USAID/BHA<sup>2</sup></b>			
<b>ETHIOPIA</b>			
Priority Worldwide Services	Transportation - Disaster Site	Countrywide	\$2,037,000
	Program Support	Countrywide	\$37,000
<b>TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE ETHIOPIA RESPONSE</b>			<b>\$2,074,000</b>
<b>TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE EAST AFRICA DESERT LOCUST RESPONSE IN FY 2021</b>			<b>\$2,074,000</b>

**USAID HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE EAST AFRICA DESERT LOCUST RESPONSE IN FY 2020<sup>1</sup>**

<b>IMPLEMENTING PARTNER</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
<b>USAID/BHA</b>			
<b>ETHIOPIA</b>			
FAO	Agriculture and Food Security	Countrywide	\$10,778,689
<b>TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE ETHIOPIA RESPONSE</b>			<b>\$10,778,689</b>
<b>KENYA</b>			
FAO	Agriculture and Food Security	Countrywide	\$4,000,000
<b>TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE KENYA RESPONSE</b>			<b>\$4,000,000</b>
<b>SOMALIA</b>			
Implementing Partner	Agriculture and Food Security	Countrywide	\$7,092,866
<b>TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE SOMALIA RESPONSE</b>			<b>\$7,092,866</b>
<b>SUDAN</b>			
FAO	Agriculture and Food Security	Countrywide	\$998,674
<b>TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE SUDAN RESPONSE</b>			<b>\$998,674</b>
<b>REGIONAL</b>			
FAO	Agriculture and Food Security	Countrywide	\$481,500
	Program Support	Regional	\$345,232
<b>TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE REGIONAL RESPONSE</b>			<b>\$826,732</b>
<b>TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING</b>			<b>\$23,696,961</b>
<b>USAID/UGANDA</b>			
<b>UGANDA</b>			
University of Greenwich – Natural Resources Institute	Agriculture and Food Security	Countrywide	\$134,862
FAO	Agriculture and Food Security	Acholi, Karamoja, Lango, and Teso regions	\$245,000
<b>TOTAL USAID/UGANDA FUNDING FOR THE UGANDA RESPONSE</b>			<b>\$379,862</b>
<b>TOTAL USAID/UGANDA FUNDING</b>			<b>\$379,862</b>
<b>TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE EAST AFRICA DESERT LOCUST RESPONSE IN FY 2020</b>			<b>\$24,076,823</b>
<b>TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE EAST AFRICA DESERT LOCUST RESPONSE</b>			<b>\$25,770,961</b>
<b>TOTAL USAID/UGANDA FUNDING FOR THE EAST AFRICA DESERT LOCUST RESPONSE</b>			<b>\$379,862</b>
<b>TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE EAST AFRICA DESERT LOCUST RESPONSE IN FYs 2020–2021</b>			<b>\$26,150,823</b>

<sup>1</sup> Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of January 29, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Includes non-food humanitarian assistance from the former Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance.

**PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION**

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at [interaction.org](https://www.interaction.org).
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
  - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: [cidi.org](https://www.cidi.org)
  - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [reliefweb.int](https://www.reliefweb.int).

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)