

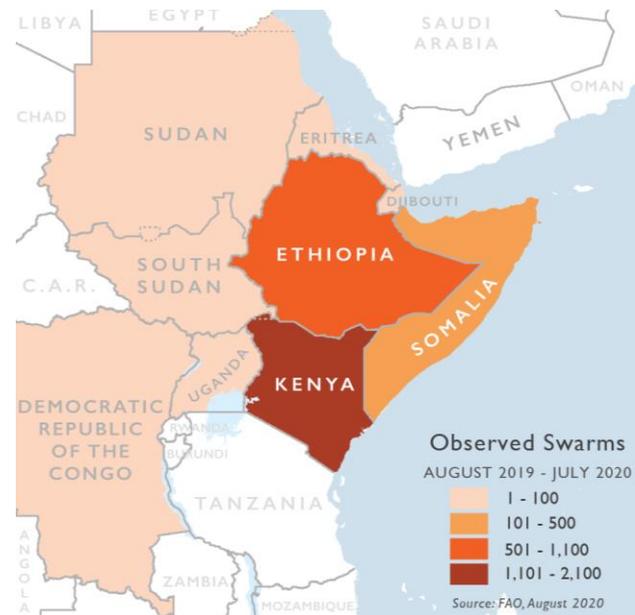
East Africa – Desert Locust Crisis

AUGUST 11, 2020

SITUATION AT A GLANCE



- Desert locust populations in Kenya have declined due to recent control operations and onward migrations toward Ethiopia and Sudan.
- FAO anticipates that Ethiopia will remain an epicenter of the regional desert locust upsurge through October unless intensive control operations are launched.
- Response teams continue to conduct locust control activities in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia but report that surveillance capacity in Ethiopia requires further strengthening.
- The threat of locust invasions into West Africa from Sudan has subsided.



TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN FUNDING For the East Africa Desert Locust Crisis Response in FY 2020	USAID/BHA ³	\$19,645,232
	USAID/Uganda	\$379,862
Total		\$20,025,094

For complete funding breakdown with partners, see detailed chart on page 5

¹ Figure includes East African countries included in the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)'s regional response plan and addendum as of late May: Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania.

² Figure reflects combined estimates of populations in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda currently experiencing Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) 3—Crisis—or higher levels of acute food insecurity. The IPC is a standardized tool that aims to classify the severity and magnitude of acute food insecurity. The IPC scale, which is comparable across countries, ranges from Minimal—IPC 1—to Catastrophe—IPC 5. IPC data are not currently available for Djibouti or Eritrea.

³ 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

Operations Continue Against Locusts in Kenya and Somalia

Response teams continue to control bands of hoppers—immature, wingless locusts—and immature swarms in northwestern Kenya, contributing to a significant decline in desert locust populations in recent weeks, FAO reports. Most swarms are now concentrated in the region’s Turkana County, where aerial and ground operations are ongoing. Northward migrations to Ethiopia and Sudan—via South Sudan and possibly northeastern Uganda—have begun; however, FAO expects the overall scale of desert locust migrations from Kenya to be smaller than previously anticipated due to the success of recent control efforts.

Meanwhile, aerial and ground teams in Somalia have launched control interventions against immature swarms detected on the northern plateau between Nugal Region’s Garoowe city and Woqooyi Galbeed Region’s Hargeysa city, where some breeding is underway; the situation in the south—where access constraints are hindering surveillance—remains unclear. Swarms in northern Somalia continue to migrate eastward and could travel across the Indian Ocean to India and Pakistan unless adequately controlled. FAO notes that the threat to Southwest Asia is expected to decrease as rains produce favorable breeding conditions in northern Somalia in the coming weeks.

Internet Services Suspension, Insecurity Hinder Surveillance in Ethiopia

Control operations against immature swarms in Ethiopia’s northern Rift Valley and eastern Harar Highlands are ongoing, with response teams also receiving reports of locust presence in Afar, Amhara, Tigray, and Somali regions in recent weeks, according to FAO. However, a countrywide suspension of internet and telecommunications services—imposed by the Government of Ethiopia in response to civil unrest in the capital city of Addis Ababa and Oromiya Region—may have hindered locust surveillance for three weeks during July, preventing timely reporting on the locust situation and challenging efforts to launch targeted pest control interventions.

FAO and the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) project that infestations could persist across Ethiopia through January 2021, with the country serving as an epicenter of the regional upsurge through at least October due to favorable breeding conditions in eastern, northern, and western Ethiopia, as well as declining desert locust populations in Kenya and Somalia. In recent weeks, immature swarms from Kenya have migrated northwards into Ethiopia and joined existing swarms, traveling to the country’s northern highlands or onward to northwestern Somalia. Two swarms from Yemen—another epicenter for summer infestations—had also arrived in northeastern Ethiopia as of early August; FAO expects further invasions from Kenya and Yemen to amplify locust breeding in Ethiopia in the coming weeks.

While FEWS NET anticipates regenerative rainfall will offset any locust-related damage to pastureland in most affected areas of northern and western Ethiopia in the coming months, localized pasture losses are likely in some conflict-affected areas of the two regions, where insecurity is restricting surveillance and control efforts. In the absence of large-scale aerial and ground control campaigns, desert locust infestations—coupled with projected below-average rainfall—will likely result in significant crop and pasture losses from October to December.

Threat of Invasions Into West Africa Subsides as Rains Continue in Sudan

The risk of onward migrations from Sudan into West Africa’s Sahel region has subsided due to seasonal rainfall in Sudan’s White Nile State and Darfur and Kordofan regions, which has produced suitable

conditions for locust breeding and development in recent weeks. As such, FAO expects swarms from Kenya to rapidly mature and lay eggs upon arrival in Sudan, reducing the likelihood of locusts invading eastern Chad and traveling further west across the Sahel in search of favorable conditions for breeding and development.

Government of Sudan Plant Protection Directorate (PPD) teams continue to survey at-risk areas in Sudan, including areas located near the Sudan–South Sudan border. Although a few swarms are expected to arrive in Sudan in the coming weeks, PPD teams had not detected any invasions from Kenya as of August 7.

Locusts and Below-Average Rains to Impact Crops and Livestock in Somalia

In recent months, the socioeconomic impact of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) mitigation measures, erratic rainfall, and desert locust infestations have exacerbated food insecurity across Somalia, particularly in central pastoral areas, where low livestock holdings, the threat of expanding locust infestations, and limited access to humanitarian assistance are driving Crisis—IPC 3—levels of acute food insecurity, according to FEWS NET. Meanwhile, the provision of emergency assistance is preventing food security conditions from deteriorating above Stressed—IPC 2—conditions in northern pastoral areas of Somalia, particularly as locusts have damaged less pastureland than initially anticipated. FEWS NET underscores that sustained assistance is critical for preventing food insecurity in Somalia’s central and northern pastoral areas and southern agro-pastoral areas from worsening during the remainder of 2020, as locust-related damage, as well as forecast below-average October-to-December *deyr* rains, could undermine crop and livestock production.

Rains Improve Pasture Availability in Kenya; Reinfestations Pose Some Risk

FEWS NET projects that recent above-average rainfall will support pasture growth across most pastoral areas of Kenya in the coming months, though locusts could cause localized forage losses in the country’s northern pastoral counties, including Mandera, Marsabit, Turkana, Samburu, and Wajir counties, should reinfestations occur. Since above-average March-to-May long rains contributed to favorable crop conditions in most areas of Kenya, food availability continues to improve with the harvest of early planted crops; however, most pastoral households will likely face Stressed levels of acute food insecurity through September, with FEWS NET projecting the persistence of Crisis conditions in insecure parts of Mandera and flood-affected areas of Tana River County during the same period.

KEY FIGURES



5

Countries receiving USAID support for desert locust control



10

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



2.1 Million

Acres of land surveyed in USAID-supported countries since early March



1 Million

Acres of land treated in USAID-supported countries since early March

U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

SURVEILLANCE AND PEST CONTROL

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 locust control teams to conduct ground interventions through the use of backpack and vehicle-mounted sprayers. USAID/BHA has also supported helicopter deployments to reinforce surveillance and control capacity in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia. 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—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, 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.

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 a more timely and effective response. 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 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 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.

USAID HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE EAST AFRICA DESERT LOCUST RESPONSE IN FY 2020¹

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
USAID/BHA²			
ETHIOPIA			
FAO	Agriculture and Food Security	Countrywide	\$7,800,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE ETHIOPIA RESPONSE			\$7,800,000
KENYA			
FAO	Agriculture and Food Security	Countrywide	\$4,000,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE KENYA RESPONSE			\$4,000,000
SOMALIA			
Implementing Partner	Agriculture and Food Security	Countrywide	\$7,000,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE SOMALIA RESPONSE			\$7,000,000
SUDAN			
FAO	Agriculture and Food Security	Countrywide	\$500,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE SUDAN RESPONSE			\$500,000
REGIONAL			

Program Support	Regional	\$345,232	
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE REGIONAL RESPONSE		\$345,232	
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING		\$19,645,232	
USAID/UGANDA			
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
TOTAL USAID/UGANDA FUNDING FOR THE UGANDA RESPONSE		\$379,862	
TOTAL USAID/UGANDA FUNDING		\$379,862	
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE EAST AFRICA DESERT LOCUST RESPONSE IN FY 2020		\$20,025,094	

¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of August 11, 2020.
² 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)