

SITUATION UPDATE



International Medical Corps Chief Operating Officer Ky Luu visits drought-affected communities in Baidoa.

Following the worst drought in 40 years, hunger is rising in Somalia, with 7.8 million people—almost half of the population—affected. As the historic multi-year drought continues into 2023, the country now faces predictions of a drier-than-normal wet season in from March through May.¹ An analysis by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) has estimated that up to 7.1 million people in Somalia are in need of urgent, multi-sectoral assistance to reduce the number of ongoing, hunger-related deaths. Famine (IPC Phase 5) is projected in areas of Bay region and in Mogadishu between April and June.²

According to UNICEF, at least 330,000 children in Somalia need lifesaving treatment for severe wasting—much more than the 190,000 who required treatment during the country's 2011 famine.³ Outbreaks of disease have spiked, with 10,440 recorded cholera cases and 59 deaths across 25 drought-affected districts since January 2022. The WASH Cluster reports that 8 million people are in need of assistance with water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), and are affected by significant water shortages, with 14 out of 18 regions being severely affected—representing a 25% increase since 2022. The cost of accessing water is significantly increasing and is a key driver of displacement among rural populations across Somalia.

Partners are now transitioning from drought response to famine prevention, reorienting responses to target the most vulnerable populations and developing famine-prevention plans. Priority needs include food assistance; WASH support, especially focusing on borehole rehabilitation, hygiene kits and access to water; and infectious disease treatment, especially response to cases of cholera and measles. Medical and nutrition supplies, nutrition-related inpatient services, non-food items (NFIs) and shelter are also needed.⁴

International Medical Corps' Response

International Medical Corps is working in Banadir, Bay, Middle Shabelle and Mudug regions to provide urgently needed, multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance. So far in 2023, we have:

- reached 222,859 people with routine household hygiene promotion activities;
- distributed 3,000 hygiene kits across sites for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Baidoa, Galkayo, Jowhar and Mogadishu;
- carried out water trucking across 10 IDP camps in Baidoa, reaching 2,000 households, with plans to extend trucking into the *Jilaal* dry season;
- constructed 120 ventilated improved pit (VIP) latrines in Baidoa, Deynile, Galkayo South and Jowhar IDP camps;

FAST FACTS

- International Medical Corps has carried out water trucking across 10 IDP camps in Baidoa, reaching 2,000 households, with plans to extend trucking into the *Jilaal* dry season.
- Since the start of 2023, International Medical Corps has admitted 4,730 children under 5 for the treatment of severe acute malnutrition without complications.
- Almost 300 women, either at-risk or survivors of GBV, enrolled in women's and girls' safe spaces across International Medical Corps' four target operational areas.

¹ FEWS NET Press Release, Jan. 23, 2023.

² [Somalia: Drought — 2015–2023 | ReliefWeb](https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/children-die-malnutrition-drought-continues-bite-somalia)

³ <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/children-die-malnutrition-drought-continues-bite-somalia>

⁴ <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-drought-response-and-famine-prevention-plan-may-december-2022-june-2022>

- helped the Ministry of Health in Galmudug conduct a second measles vaccination campaign, reaching 8,769 children in Galkayo;
- reached 22,242 people through outpatient consultations, providing treatment for communicable diseases, reproductive health, non-communicable diseases and injuries;
- admitted 4,730 children under 5 for the treatment of severe acute malnutrition without complications, and admitted 118 children to stabilization centers in Galkayo and Jowhar; and
- enrolled 268 at-risk women and survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) at women's and girls' safe spaces, and provided 97 GBV case management services, including psychosocial support and dignity kit distributions.

Future response

Somalia faces a fifth consecutive dry season—a bleak phenomenon that has not occurred since rainfall records began. The morbidity rate is expected to increase in the coming months, especially for women and children, with worsening food insecurity as well as water scarcity. International Medical Corps is looking to expand operations in areas designated as high priority by OCHA, as we confront this humanitarian crisis and prepare for projections of IPC Phase 5.