



PRESS RELEASE

The WHO Foundation launches Health Emergency Appeal for the drought crises in the Sahel and greater Horn of Africa

- US\$ 186.7M is required by WHO to deliver urgent healthcare to people in the Sahel and Horn of Africa facing extreme food shortages and malnutrition caused by, drought, conflict, and rising international food prices
- With more than 60 million people struggling to get access to food and safe water, urgent support is needed to prevent loss of life from hunger and disease
- Money raised will fund life-saving emergency nutrition care, essential medicines, prevention and control of infectious diseases, vaccinations, and increase the capacity of health workers

Thursday 15 September 2022: The WHO Foundation has launched a [fundraising campaign](#) to raise funds for WHO's Health Emergency responses for the drought crises in the Sahel and Horn of Africa. The two WHO appeals are in response to deep concern for millions of people in both regions amidst extreme food shortages, insecurity, climate change, and the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The WHO Foundation is calling on people around the world to raise US\$ 186.7M to help give millions of people access to the health services they need, now and in the long term.

The Sahel region is facing one of the largest, fastest-growing, and longest-lasting crises in the world. Access to health has become more limited due to COVID-19, damaged health facilities as well as increasing violence in the region due to security incidents, attacks, and kidnappings. In 2022, more than 33 million people across Burkina Faso, the Far-North of Cameroon, Chad, Mali, Niger, and North-East Nigeria will need life-saving assistance – an increase of more than 25% over the last five years.

Millions in the Horn of Africa are also facing extreme hunger across the region due to various causes: the worst droughts in decades in some areas while there is severe flooding in other areas, compounded by years of conflict and instability, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and rising food prices. Over 28 million people across Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda, are experiencing extreme hunger, making them increasingly vulnerable to malnutrition, infection, disease, and death.

Outbreaks of infectious diseases are a major concern in both regions, due to the high level of displaced families forced into unhygienic living conditions, combined with low vaccination rates and disrupted health service availability. In the Sahel region, more than 110 000 cases of cholera were recorded in 2021, and yellow fever transmission is at a 20-year high. In the greater Horn of Africa countries face concurrent outbreaks of measles, cholera, yellow fever, Dengue, Malaria, and meningitis, among others. There are around 5 million refugees and 12 million Internally Displaced people in the countries in the region.

The Foundation's appeal will support WHO's efforts on the ground to increase the capacity of health workers, prevent the spread of disease, provide essential medicines and emergency nutrition, vaccinations, and set up mobile health centres for people forced to leave their homes.

Along with countering the health consequences of malnutrition, WHO is helping countries to detect, prepare for and respond to outbreaks of diseases like cholera, measles, and malaria.



Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General said:

“Hunger is a direct threat to the health and survival of millions of people in the Sahel and greater Horn of Africa, but it also weakens the body’s defences and opens the door to disease. WHO is looking to people around the world to support our work on the ground responding to this dual threat, providing treatment for malnourished people, and defending them against infectious diseases.”

Dr Matshidiso Moeti WHO Africa Regional Director said:

“The worsening humanitarian crises in the Sahel and across the Horn of Africa that have driven millions of people to extreme deprivation and to the brink of starvation require urgent action. However, humanitarian assistance, including for emergency health services, has been severely impaired by chronically low funding. Without immediate response, millions of lives risk being lost as these emergencies slip off the world’s attention.”

Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari, WHO EMRO Regional Director said:

“Along with countering the dire consequences of malnutrition, WHO is helping the region’s already vulnerable countries prepare for and respond to outbreaks of cholera, measles, and malaria, among other diseases and serious health concerns which will be exacerbated due to this health crisis. In the spirit of the Triple Billion target of GPW13 to promote health, keep the world safe and serve the vulnerable, WHO is delivering crucial life-saving services to afflicted communities. But we can only continue to do so with generous donations to the Health Emergency Appeal. We need all the help we can get, and we need it now.”

Anil Soni, Chief Executive Officer of the WHO Foundation, said:

“Millions of people in the greater Horn of Africa are at risk of starvation as countries face food shortages, not seen in decades. WHO is responding to the resulting health crises to ensure people can access health services, to get treatment for severe malnutrition and protect them from disease. The WHO Foundation urges anyone who can, to donate to the Health Emergency Appeal to ensure WHO can continue their important work delivering vital healthcare operations to prevent starvation and disease and save lives.”

Donate to the Health Emergency Appeal: Drought crises in the Sahel and Horn of Africa now to help WHO deliver urgent healthcare to people in the Sahel and Horn of Africa facing extreme food shortages caused by conflict, drought, and rising international food prices.

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Notes to editors



Photos for media are available [here](#) after [registration](#).

For more information on the WHO Emergency Appeals, see:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/situations/drought-food-insecurity-greater-horn-of-africa>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/situations/humanitarian-crisis-in-sahel-region-of-africa>

What is the WHO Foundation?

Established in 2020 as an independent entity, the WHO Foundation complements and strengthens the work of WHO and its global network of partners by mobilizing new funding from diverse sources—including philanthropists, corporate entities, and the public—to power WHO’s mission. By addressing the world’s most urgent health issues in a new, transformative, catalytic way, the WHO Foundation aims to provide everyone, everywhere, a healthier, more equitable future.