Sida

Humanitarian Crisis Analysis 2025

Kenya

30 September 2025

1. Crisis overview[i]

3.4/ 5	4.3 million	n/a	n/a	n/a
Inform severity index	People in need of humanitarian aid (INFORM 2025)	People targeted in the response plan	Required to reach the target	Of the required funding secured

18 MSEK	-	3 MSEK	21 MSEK
Initial allocation	Additional allocation	Flexible funding	Total Sida funding 2025

Kenya is vulnerable to natural hazards and climate change-related shocks but also see new arrivals of refugees due to instability and natural hazards in neighbouring countries. Kenya is host to 837,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, primarily from Somalia and South Sudan, who need protection and who rely on humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs.

Despite improvements in food security outcomes in 2024 as a result of above-normal rainfall, the worst-affected households have not been able to fully recover from the 2021-2023 drought which caused widespread food insecurity, malnutrition and a rise in protection-related concerns. The El Niño conditions in late 2023 and early 2024 led to heavy rainfall that caused severe flooding. The floods displaced over 300,000 people and perpetuated the food insecurity and nutrition crisis, which was already significant in the arid and semi-arid lands.

The 2025 February Short Rains Assessment indicated 2 million Kenyans were facing acute food insecurity, more than doubling from July 2024 figures. Figures have slightly improved due to better than expected precipitation during the long rains period. However, the forecast for below average short rains for the period October to December, limited income and elevated staple food prices will continue to hamper the recovery from the previous severe drought.

2. Humanitarian needs & affected population

Five consecutive below-average rainy seasons, compounded by socio-economic vulnerability and previous shocks, left more than 6.4 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in mid-2023. The drought resulted in acute water shortages, failed harvests, rising food prices and widespread livestock death in largely pastoralist areas. Combined with the decreasing value of the Kenyan shilling, food and basic commodity prices rose, contributing to a significant rise in food insecurity, malnutrition rates and subsequent protection concerns, including GBV and child protection concerns.

Large parts of the country affected by years of drought were impacted by heavy and erratic rainfall driven by El Niño in 2024, causing loss of life, widespread flooding and the displacement. The refugee camps Dadaab and Kakuma/Kalobeyei were also affected by flooding. The February Short Rains Assessment indicated 2 million Kenyans were facing acute food insecurity, more than doubling from July 2024 figures. Better than expected precipitation during the long rains period have improved the situation. The July Long Rains assessment indicated that 1.76 million Kenyans were facing acute food insecurity. However, the forecast for below average short rains for the period October to December, limited income and elevated staple food prices will continue to hamper the recovery from the previous severe drought. According to the forecast 2.2 million Kenyans will be in need of humanitarian assistance (IPC phase 3) across Turkana, Mandera, Garissa, Wajir, and Marsabit arid and semi-arid (ASAL) counties

According to INFORM, the number of people in need as of August 2025 is 4.3 million, where the largest proportion of those affected are in IPC category 3. The key drivers of food insecurity are high prices of staple foods, the climate shocks, crop pests and diseases and conflict and insecurity.

Over 800,000 children aged 6 to 59 months and pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls require nutrition supplementation with high malnutrition rates concentrated in ASAL counties like Turkana, Isiolo, Marsabit, Wajir, Garissa, and Tana River due to the lingering cumulative effects of five previous consecutive failed seasons, poor child-feeding practices, and a high disease burden. Despite these challenges, early action, resilience-building, and emergency assistance have helped mitigate the worst impacts of food insecurity. Continued investment in community-based disaster risk reduction, anticipatory actions, and social protection programs is critical to reducing reliance on humanitarian aid.

Kenya is currently hosting nearly 850,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, primarily in Dadaab and Kakuma/Kalobeyei. All refugees are in need of protection and rely on humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs, including food, nutrition, shelter, education, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and healthcare. Unaccompanied and separated children, minorities, women and girls, and unregistered individuals in Dadaab, who lack legal documentation and protected refugee status, are particularly vulnerable to violence, abuse and exploitation.

In terms of sectoral priorities, there is a need for sustained and integrated health, nutrition, education and WASH services in order to support the recovery of drought and flood-affected communities and refugees, with clear linkages to food security and livelihood. Protection needs to be mainstreamed to respond to and mitigate gender-based violence and child protection risks.

3. The humanitarian response

The Kenya Drought Response Plan (DRP) was launched in 2023 to focus on food security, nutrition, WASH and health, along with large funding requests for education and protection. The Refugee Response was included as a separate sector in the DRP 2023, with its own funding requirement and targets. The subsequent flooding response during 2024 (Kenya Drought response Plan 2023) was well financed. As the food security projections improved , there has been no UN-coordinated response plan or appeal for the humanitarian situation in Kenya during 2024. This has posed challenges for the coordination of the response to the population in need.

The global freeze and scale-back of US humanitarian funding announced in January 2025 is having major consequences on aid operations, and the Humanitarian Country Team is adapting the response in light of the new funding landscape.

Meanwhile, on 28th March 2025 the Shirika Plan was launched. The core objectives of the national Shirika Plan include redesigning camps into integrated municipalities, mobilizing financial, technical, and material support to ease the burden on host communities, and transitioning from humanitarian aid to long-term development through the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. This shift entails government-led service provision for refugees while fostering socio-economic inclusion, self- reliance, and resilience among both refugee and host communities. The plan is structured around six pillars: systems building, integrated service delivery, human capital and skills development, climate action and natural resource management, sustainable economic growth, and durable solutions with complementary pathways. It will roll out in three phases: the transition phase from 2024 to 2027, stabilization from 2028 to 2031, and resilience from 2032 to 2035.

The continued cuts to humanitarian budgets are leading to stretched services but also a uncoordinated response. This is particularly the case for new arrivals, of whom there continue to be significant numbers, which could increase further given regional instability. As the humanitarian response decreases in light of the overall improvement of the situation, it will be important to continue assisting the most vulnerable groups, to avoid a return to larger-scale crisis.

In the context where there are still many constraints on genuine self-reliance in the form of restraints on movement and limits on the ability to find employment, it will be challenging to make this work. There is need to advance sectoral plans and sectoral committees, e.g. in the education, water, health and social protection sectors, in order for the refugees to achieve self-reliance and give them independence and autonomy to champion being included in Kenya's basic service provision and social protection schemes. Thus, there is an urgent to maximise the benefit of the Shirika Plan process for displacement-affected communities in Kenya.

4. Sida's humanitarian allocation

In light of Sida's humanitarian allocation analysis for 2025, Kenya has been identified as a crisis where needs are comparatively less acute than in other countries. Sida's allocation will therefore be substantially reduced in 2025, with the objective of phasing out the humanitarian allocation to Kenya by 2026, unless there is a significant change in the context. Sida will maintain capacity to respond to sudden and major changes in needs over the course of 2025, in line with its global, needs-based allocation methodology. The focus of Sida's humanitarian assistance to Kenya in 2025 is twofold. One priority is to address the protection and multi-sectoral needs of refugees, asylum-seekers and unregistered individuals in Dadaab and Kakuma/Kalobeyei. Sida will prioritise organisations that provide multisectoral assistance to address basic needs of the refugee population, including protection, shelter, health, nutrition, education and WASH services. Partners with a particular focus on protection have been prioritised, including those providing psychosocial support, case management services and support to survivors of violence and at-risk individuals, including the unregistered population in Dadaab who await refugee status determination.

Secondly, Sida supports organisations that provide integrated health, nutrition, WASH and protection services to vulnerable communities in Kenya's ASAL counties who have been impacted by drought and flooding, thus facing high levels of food insecurity, malnutrition, health and protection concerns. Sida prioritises organisations with a multi-sectoral approach that is gender-sensitive and integrates protection during the provision of life-saving nutrition, health and WASH interventions. Sida will provide quality funding through the programme based approach (PBA) modality, in order to provide partners with the flexibility to adapt their programmes, and shift sectoral and geographical priorities, to meet the most urgent needs. This will also help ensure that partners can leverage Sida's support with other funding sources to holistically address the needs of the affected populations. Altogether, these priorities have informed the following proposal for Sida's humanitarian allocation for Kenya in 2025.

INITIAL ALLOCATION (SEK)		
PARTNER	SECTOR	INITIAL ALLOCATION
AAH	Health, Nutrition, WASH, Protection/GBV; Food security	7,000,000
DRC	Protection, Rapid response, WASH	6,000,000
UNHCR	Multi-sectoral (Health, Protection, Shelter, WASH, Education)	5,000,000
TOTAL		**18,000,000**

FLEXIBLE FUNDING & ADDITIONAL ALLOCATIONS 2025 (SEK)		
PARTNER	FLEXIBLE FUNDING	ADDITIONAL ALLOCATION
MSB	1,500,000	-
WFP	1,458,090[1]	-
TOTAL	2,958,090	-

[i] The 2025 initial allocation of humanitarian funding is based on Sida's humanitarian allocation analysis methodology. The analysis reflects the current humanitarian situation across crises and is being updated continuously with the latest available data. The information in the HCA is based on reports, data, and information from partner organisations and other entities, as well as observations from field visits and dialogue with partners.

[1] Allocated under financial year 2024 for relief co-ordination and support services