

UK announces additional drought support to Somalia

The UK's Special Envoy for Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Affairs, Nick Dyer, visited Somalia this week to call for a concerted effort to prevent millions of people losing their lives to the threat of famine.

While in Somalia, Mr Dyer announced an additional \$8 million (£5.5 million) package of UK support to deal with the effects of the drought. This is in addition to the \$10 million announced by the UK's Minister for Africa, Vicky Ford in January 2022.

The funding will go towards providing vital assistance, such as cash to buy urgent food supplies and water to vulnerable families across Somalia.

While in Somalia, the Special Envoy held meetings with Jubaland State President Ahmed Madobe and South West State President, Mohamed Abdiiaziz Hassan Laftagareen, two leaders of the worst affected regions to discuss the extent of the worsening drought.

Mr Dyer also held meetings with Somalia's Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble, where they discussed the severity of the humanitarian needs. Mr. Dyer noted that the situation will lead to extreme losses and further instability, unless collective and scaled up action is taken now.

Nick Dyer, UK Special Envoy for Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Affairs, said:

The lives of people in Somalia are on the line. We know from 2017 when we and partners acted early, lives were saved. We can and must provide the assistance that the most vulnerable need and save lives.

Over 90% of the country is affected by the drought with the food security situation likely to deteriorate rapidly leaving at least a third of the population, 4.6 million Somalis facing crisis-to-emergency-level food insecurity from February to May 2022.

The drought has worsened an already excessive levels of suffering in a country where 50% of the population needs humanitarian assistance. A fifth of the population (2.9m people) are already displaced as a result of previous humanitarian crisis. There is a very real prospect that this will grow to almost a third if, as anticipated, a further 1.4m are displaced as a result of this year's drought.

Over 271,000 have already abandoned their homes in search of food, water and pasture; making Somalia the most severely drought affected country in the Horn of Africa.

The UK is supporting the humanitarian response in Somalia through critical infrastructure development such as water dams which will help over 72,000 people across the country. Over 500,000 Somalis will also receive cash assistance to buy urgent food and water thanks to new UK support.