



PEACE, PROSPERITY AND
REGIONAL INTEGRATION

DESERT LOCUST INVASION IN THE IGAD REGION

UPDATE ON THE REGIONAL TECHNICAL AND POLICY MEETINGS 2020 AND 2021

**On behalf of Dr. Abdi Jama,
IFRAH / IGAD Desert Locust Task Force**

IDDRSI Meeting, Mombasa, March 2021

CONTENT

- Background
- Current Status
- IGAD response to the DL invasion
- Ongoing Technical Meetings and Upcoming Ministerial Conference on DL
- Coordination Platform and the Way Forward

BACKGROUND

- Despite the collaborative efforts of the IGAD Member States and development partners to manage harmful pests, combatting against the transboundary ones such as desert locusts has proven to be complex.
- Experts have warned that, if left uncontrolled, desert locust populations could grow both in number and density and would be capable of creating a humanitarian crisis of biblical proportion.
- This poses an unprecedented risk of food insecurity and severe socio-economic hardship to communities whose livelihoods majorly depend on farming and pasture.
- IGAD and Development Partners identified the need to strengthen and strategize coordination efforts on the best approach to manage the pest among all affected countries.

CURRENT STATUS

- As of Mid-March 2021, FAO indicates that recent control operations (specifically between December 2020 and February 2021) in Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya was generally successful in reducing the numbers and impacts of Desert Locusts in the region.
- Member States and FAO are monitoring the situation and heavily involved in control measures in north and north-eastern Somalia where locust swarms are moving west towards Dirdawa and Jigjiga in Ethiopia.
- The major control measures against this infestation will be over by Autumn 2021 unless key drivers, such as, weather conditions do not change in favor of desert locust movement and breeding.

IGAD RESPONSE TO DL INVASION

34th Extraordinary Summit of IGAD Heads of State and Governments (Feb 9, 2020 in Addis Ababa) mandated IGAD to coordinate the DL control

IGAD Technical and Ministerial Meetings on Desert Locust Invasion and Coordination of Control Operations in the IGAD Region (May 21, 2020)

Launching of IGAD Desert Locust Task Force

IGAD RESPONSE TO DL INVASION

- Special reports and alerts from FSNWG and ICPAC
- Regular ICPAC news articles, updates and early warning are shared
- Biannual Meeting on Food Security and Nutrition (DL updates)
- FSNWG conducted 2 Livelihood related Assessment
- IFRAH led the Desert Locust Weekly Task Force meetings on Coordination, Resource mobilization and Advocacy
- Etc.

FSNWG
Food Security and Nutrition Working Group

Press Release

Immediate early action needed to prevent food crisis in the Greater Horn of Africa

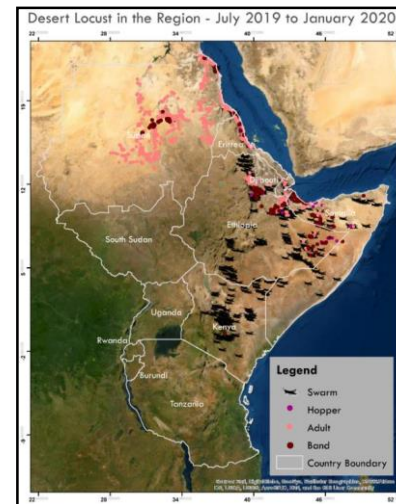
High risk of worsening food insecurity in parts of Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia and Uganda if forecasted rainfall deficits materialize

Nairobi, Kenya, April 3, 2019 - Around 10.7 million people are currently food insecure across Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia and Karamoja region in Uganda.

FSNWG Alert, Dec 2019

A severe desert locust outbreak threatens rural food security across the Horn of Africa

- A serious and widespread Desert Locust outbreak is destroying crops and pasture across eastern Ethiopia and neighbouring areas of Somalia, parts of Sudan and Eritrea, with a high risk of further spread in the absence of immediate and significant scale up in control activities. Mature desert locust swarms first crossed to eastern and north eastern regions of Ethiopia from Yemen and Somalis around July/August 2019 and have since invaded several pastoral and agro-pastoral areas in the Horn of Africa.
- A typical swarm can be comprised of up to 150 million locusts per km² and its daily consumption of crops can correspond to the annual consumption of 2,500 people. Affected areas can experience up to a 100% loss in crops and fodder. Given the severity of the outbreak and the limited capacities to control it, food security actors should begin preparing for the likelihood of increased food security-related needs in all the affected areas.
- In Somalia, the ongoing Desert Locust outbreak is the worst in over 25 years with over 70,000 hectares affected in Somaliland, Puntland and Galmudug (Mudug), according to FAO. Migrating swarms have recently been reported as far south as Beletweyne in Hirshabelle State. Meanwhile, in the Amhara and Tigray regions of Ethiopia, about 430 km² (43,000 hectares) have been affected in the past two months with the estimated loss of 1.3 metric tonnes of vegetation, inclusive of crops and pastures. Infestations have spread to pastoral Somali region of Ethiopia where hopper bands are present that will become new swarms in the coming weeks.



Country	Very High Risk
South Sudan	
Eritrea	<i>Gash Barka, west of Maekel</i>
Uganda	
Kenya	
Ethiopia	<i>Tigray</i>
Somalia	<i>Woqooyi Galbeed, Togdheer, Sool, Sanaag, Barj, Nugaal, Mudug, Galguduud</i>
Djibouti	
Sudan	<i>Blue Nile, White Nile, South Kordofan, Sennar, Gezira, and Gedarif</i>



ON-GOING MEETINGS AND UPCOMING CONFERENCE

- World Bank, FAO, and French Development Agency conducted studies late 2020 where each concluded some priorities and recommendations.
- These studies, along with IGAD recommendations from the two IGAD high-level conferences held in 2020, were presented and discussed at two consultative meetings that took place in January with regional and national technical staff members, and in February with IGAD Development Partners.
- IFRAH, WB, AFD and FAO are consolidating all recommendations and outcomes.
- The consolidated matrix will be further fine tuned by the IGAD MS Permanent Secretaries and relevant directors in April 2021 at another virtual meeting.
- All the recommendations and key priorities to be presented and endorsed at a regional ministerial conference in May 2021.

NEXT STEPS

- Establish an **Inter-regional Coordination Platform for Desert Locusts and other Transboundary Pests**. Currently discussion ongoing to finalize the legal and administrative issues regarding funding of this Platform by the World Bank.
- Develop an inter-agency longer term program for sustainable management of DL (on-going with the leadership of IGAD, WB, FAO, AFD)

Other recommended steps are to:

- Establish a Regional Desert Locust and Transboundary Pests Early Warning System;
- Build regional capacity in monitoring, surveillance, control, spread and prediction;
- Aim to use harmonized assessment tools to continuously monitor Desert Locust impacts;
- Enhance climate monitoring and forecasting for prediction of Desert Locust and other migratory pest outbreaks in the region;
- Implement early livelihood support and recovery across affected households and communities; and
- Encourage south-south exchange of experts, knowledge and equipment.



PEACE, PROSPERITY AND
REGIONAL INTEGRATION

THANK YOU

