

ActionAid's Response to the Drought in **Borana**

Borana is one of drought affected areas in the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia due to La-Lina induced drought for the fifth consecutive season where there has been below the average rain. As a result, the water resources including surface water (streams and rivers), ground water, and ground water table have significantly declined reduced soil moisture, and grasses turned into dust. In general, the drought-stress in the lives and livelihoods of the community.

Historically, the Borana Zone experienced severe drought occurrences during 1983/84, 1988/89, 1999/2000, 2007/2008, 2011, 2014, 2015/2016 and 2017 (FAO). Studies

have shown that the recovery path of communities severely affected by intense drought which would last in the period of 7-13 years; therefore, households were not yet to fully recover from the impact of the back-to-back El Nino-induced drought in the previous years. The situation is compounded by the desert locust invasion since 2019 and internal and cross border conflicts.



Grasses are turned into dust.



A Borana man witnessing his ox dying of drought.

ActionAid

ActionAid has a strong presence in Ethiopia and has built long-standing partnerships with women's networks, community based organizations, government structures, and community leaders through its humanitarian and long term development

ActionAid's Humanitarian interventions are guided by CHS and AA's humanitarian signature to promote accountability, shifting the power, ensure women's and young peoples' leadership as a cross-cutting issues through capacity building of local women leaders and young people to hold

leadership positions in the emergency response, hold duty bearers accountable for humanitarian aid (accountability to people in emergencies) and supporting women to champion climate resilience and agricultural alternatives such as agroecology. ActionAid Ethiopia is working with local partner organisations, women leaders, and young people to provide life-saving food relief, water, livelihoods, and protection support. Together with partners, we are:



Meeting immediate needs by supporting families with emergency food relief, cash support, and dignity kits for women and girls, including soap and sanitary pads. We are also rehabilitating water points and transporting water to impacted areas using trucks.



Building the resilience of communities demonstrate the nexus emergency response, recovery, and resilience and long term development programs. Through livelihood diversification, organizing women and youth groups, create access to finance, promoting energy efficient household cooking stove and conservation of natural resources.



Preventing gender-based violence and exploitation by establishing safe spaces for women and girls and supporting them to access protection services, including referrals, psychosocial support, medical and legal aid.



Strengthening women's leadership by coordinating with women leaders and groups and supporting women to meaningfully participate in community decision-making processes. We are also supporting women to hold duty bearers to account to deliver effective, timely and appropriate responses.

Borana Response

ActionAid in partnership with the local actors such as Action for Development conducted multisectoral assessment in Hudet Woreda of Dawa Zone of Somali region and Watchile Woreda of Borena zone of Oromia region. Series of consultation with affected community representatives and local institutions was conducted through focus group discussion and key informant interview with leaders of community institutions, and local administration and prepared drought response plan and set a target and worked to its realization.

In partnership with IRC/ECHO, DANIDA and International Humanitarian Action & Resilience Team (IHART) as well as Bandaid, community, local and regional government ActionAid has been extend emergency response for highly affected in six Woredas of Borena zone including Watchile, Dubluk, Arero, Dilo, Guchi and Moyale woredas.



A roadside shelter of Borana community

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Food items and cash were distributed to the most affected women-headed families

- 1) Providing immediate humanitarian assistance through emergency response (food distribution, multi-purpose cash) of targeted drought-affected small holder farmers and drought affected pastoralists and agro-pastoral communities. The cash transfer values will enable targeted beneficiaries to restock their animal herd. Both cash and food distribution in Watchile woreda spans for four months.
- 2) Strengthening food security and resilience by providing support to recover livelihoods and self-reliance, including repair, and equipping of emergency agriculture facilities (water point rehabilitation and vet clinics) and other urgently needed interventions designed to mitigate the effects of disrupted seasons and reduce the food availability gaps.
- 3) Protection mainstreaming, case management and for the women, young women, and the children to prevent and mitigating gender-based violence (GBV), sexual harassment, exploitation, and abuse (SHEA) and child abuse through provision of protection services and through an inclusive approach to protection where women, particularly young women, participate in Disaster Risk Management and other humanitarian structures, as well as in committees established by AAE and local partners.



Water facilities were rehabilitated to resume water distribution for the drought-affected community

Targeting and people reached

The response reached a direct target group of 31,900 people (of whom 19140 were women). Indirectly, the reach was considerably higher via for example the rehabilitation of six water points. A participatory and community owned targeting and selection process was ensured through the woreda's DRM committees, as well as proactive involvement of women and youth, including young women in the discussion of the selection criteria. Complaint handling committees were also formed before the actual selection was carried out, and the committees had a high representation of young men, young women, and women in general. As part of the targeting process the list of targeted community members were posted in visible places at the center of villages/ camps.



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