

Almost 73K children in Kenya at risk of dying of starvation

Almost 73,000 children in Kenya are severely malnourished and at risk of dying from hunger because of a severe drought, a group of aid organizations said yesterday.

The worst-affected area was the north-western region of Turkana South, where 12 per cent of children under 5 years of age suffer from severe acute malnutrition, according to nutrition assessments conducted by county health departments in cooperation with the United Nations children's fund Unicef, Save the Children and various other international aid groups. The assessments also reveal alarmingly high severe acute malnutrition rates in East Pokot (5.8 per cent), Mandera (5.2 per cent), Samburu (3.8 per cent) and West Pokot (3.2 per cent), according to the report.

Nearly 40,000 pregnant and nursing women across the East African nation are malnourished - a 20-per-cent increase from last year - according to the assessment. "The drought has left tens of thousands of children and families ... in a life-threatening situation," said Save the Children interim country director Francis Woods.

"Families in some of the hardest-hit areas have been pushed to the brink with the loss of their livestock, which they depend on for their livelihood, food and milk," Woods added.

"Many of them are now barely surviving on just a meal a day. Many mothers can no longer breastfeed their babies because they are too starved to produce enough milk," said Woods. Kenya's food security has deteriorated since the end of 2016 due to a severe drought affecting half of the country's 47 counties, according to the UN.

Source:

<https://www.dailysabah.com/africa/2017/08/22/almost-73k-children-in-kenya-at-risk-of-dying-of-starvation>

[Disclaimer]