

Cholera epidemic fears in Somalia and Kenya as severe flooding forces families to flee their homes



More than 150,000 people have been forced to flee north eastern Kenya after the River Tana burst its banks CREDIT: ANDREW KASUKU /AP

A potentially lethal epidemic of cholera and other disease is set to sweep parts of Somalia and Kenya after severe flooding left hundreds of thousands homeless in the two countries, aid workers have warned.

The Somali prime minister, Hassan Ali Khaire, appealed for international humanitarian intervention after two of the largest rivers in the centre of the country - the Shebelle and the Juba - burst their banks, sending floodwaters coursing through riverside towns and villages.

More than 100,000 people were forced to flee Beledweyne, a town in the Shebelle Valley 206 miles north of the capital Mogadishu, over the weekend, local officials said.



Hundreds of thousands more, including 174,000 in the town of Baidoa, are struggling to survive in partially flooded homes.

But it is in some of the country's makeshift camps, where up to 2m Somalis

fleeing fighting in one of the world's most fragile states, where concern is highest.

"Our staff on the ground have seen the elderly, women and children struggling to survive while their flimsy shelters are knee-high full of stagnant water," said Victor Moses, Somalia country director for the Norwegian Refugee Council, a charity.

"With limited access to proper toilets and clean water, it's a ticking time bomb for disease outbreaks like cholera and malaria."

Similar fears are echoed across the border in Kenya, particularly at the Dadaab refugee camps, home to more than 200,000 people, most of them Somali.

Rising water levels in the camp have forced many of its inhabitants to abandon their shelters and seek refuge in schools. Meanwhile, pit latrines in the camp are overflowing, resulting in raw sewage swilling through the camp.

Aid workers say they are already seeing an increase in Acute Watery Diarrhoea and fear that a cholera outbreak could be imminent.



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Displaced persons in Somalia on receiving end as floods wreak havoc.

internally displaced persons in Somalia are once again staring at a humanitarian crisis as torrential rains accompanied by floods wreak havoc in their makeshift dwelling place.



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When the world engines & techs fail to save, #Somalia turned to donkey-cart first-responders to save lives effected by flood in #Baletweyne!

Parts of north eastern Kenya have seen the heaviest recorded rain in two decades. More than 150,000 people have been forced to flee after the River Tana burst its banks. With more rain expected, local police ordered the forcible evacuation of vulnerable villages.

“Those who resist will be prosecuted for attempted suicide,” Michael Kioni, the deputy county commissioner for the Tana River, was quoted as saying by Kenya’s Daily Nation newspaper.

The Kenyan army and Red Cross were forced to mount a major operation last week to rescue 3,000 people marooned by another flooded river, the Galana-Sabaki, which destroyed a number of tourist camps in Kenya’s Tsavo East National Park, one of the country’s largest.

More than 200,000 people have been left homeless by the floods, according to the Red Cross, devastating the livelihoods of many smallholder farmers by ruining their crops and carrying away their livestock.

Source: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/0/cholera-epidemic-fears-somalia-keny>

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