Coronavirus: EU provides support in Horn of Africa region

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The EU is providing an additional €105.5 million to countries in the Horn of Africa as the coronavirus pandemic risks worsening the humanitarian situation across the region where many continue to suffer from armed conflict, displacement, and recurrent droughts and floods. Furthermore, a large-scale infestation of locusts threatens food security and livelihoods of many vulnerable people in the region.

Commissioner for Crisis Management, Janez Lenarčič said: “The EU remains committed to help address humanitarian needs in countries in the Horn of Africa, all the more so in these challenging times. EU aid will support communities at risk of hunger and strengthen measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus. A global pandemic requires a global response.”

Funding from this aid package goes to humanitarian projects in Djibouti (€500,000), Ethiopia (€42 million), Kenya (€15 million) and Somalia (€48 million). It will help:

- support the health facilities in the provision of basic services, epidemics control and prepare them to face the coronavirus pandemic.
- provide food assistance to people in need, such as by supporting farmers to get seeds and fodder for their livestock; provide treatment for acute malnutrition, especially for young children
- address the basic needs of refugees and internally displaced people, such as protection, shelter, food, access to health and nutrition care and clean water, and education for children.

The EU’s humanitarian aid forms part of the broader EU support in the region, which includes longer-term development cooperation.

Background:

With some 25 million people already at risk of food shortages in the region, the looming desert locust upsurge is an additional threat to food security and livelihoods, especially for the most vulnerable communities. Their food access is at risk of being further cut down by rising food prices. The situation is further aggravated by the coronavirus pandemic, as prevention and control measures can also, as an indirect consequence, place additional challenges to the delivery of humanitarian aid and to reaching people in need.

EU humanitarian projects in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia addressing food shortages and loss of livelihoods caused by locust swarms are being allocated €22 million from this aid package. Furthermore, earlier in 2020, the EU already mobilised €11 million in humanitarian and development funding to the UN’s Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) to help it address the locust outbreak in the region and provide support to affected pastoralists and farmers.

A share of the funding announced today will also contribute to the Team Europe's response to the coronavirus pandemic. In addition, EU humanitarian aid will be provided to the World Health Organization’s global coronavirus response in partnership with health authorities in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia to scale up operational readiness for early detection and response to the pandemic.

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