

Conditions grow worse for Somali refugees in camps

by [Fredrick Nzwili](#) in the [August 8, 2012](#) issue

Conditions in the Dadaab refugee complex in northeastern Kenya are worsening one year after thousands of Somali migrants flocked to the settlement, according to relief agencies, which include church-based organizations.

The world's largest refugee camp is host to more than 500,000 migrants who fled conflict and famine, but many of them are without adequate shelter, water, sanitation, and health and security services, say the agencies.

"The supply of new water and sanitation services to 50,000 refugees is in danger. Without the only source of safe water and new latrines, the threat of cholera is greatly increased," noted a briefing paper released July 12 by the Lutheran World Federation, Catholic Relief Service, CARE, the Danish Refugee Council, the International Rescue Committee, Oxfam and Terre des Hommes.

The agencies highlighted the looming funding shortage for the camp, where money for vital services is anticipated to run out in two to three months. At least 200,000 people will be badly affected unless \$25 million is quickly raised.

"The 250,000-odd refugees who flooded into Dadaab over the past two years mean that there is now a funding shortfall of at least \$60 million for the five camps," said Lennart Hernander, LWF representative for the Kenya-Djibouti program.

The relief agencies are calling on the international community to rethink its approach to long-term solutions for the camps.

With 164,000 children out of school, the aid gap is denying many of them an education, said Hernander, whose organization is a member of ACT Alliance, the Geneva-based network of church organizations.

"If children are not going to school and if people do not have proper shelter and other services, this has the potential to fuel further insecurity," said Stephen

Vaughn, head of CARE in Kenya.

Refugee camps are temporary solutions, and the situation is increasingly untenable, noted Nigel Tricks, head of Oxfam, Kenya. —ENInews