



SNAPSHOT BRIEF | June 2026



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

UNHCR  
The UN Refugee AgencyWFP  
World Food ProgrammeTHE NGO  
REFUGEE  
GROUP

## What is Differentiated Assistance?

Differentiated Assistance is a government-led, multi-stakeholder, multi sectoral approach to transforming refugee support in Kenya.

Is aligned with the Global, Regional, National and County policy and regulatory frameworks, embracing “do no harm” across all interventions

Led by the Department of Refugee Services (DRS) in partnership with UNHCR, WFP, national, county government departments, including the municipalities, humanitarian partners, the private sector and communities, the approach shifts from: **One-size-fits-all humanitarian assistance** **Targeted support based on refugee households needs and capacities.**

### The goal is to:

- Protect the most vulnerable
- Use resources more efficiently
- Reduce dependency on humanitarian assistance
- Strengthen pathways to self-reliance

The approach integrates proactive communication and community engagement, households' assessments and categorization, tailored assistance packages, supported by a robust monitoring and evaluation, a grievances redress mechanism, and continuous risk analysis to ensure adaptability and effectiveness.

## 2. DA categorization

Households are categorized into four groups based on vulnerability and self-reliance capacity.

**Category 1:** Highly vulnerable households  
Require significant humanitarian support.

**Category 2:** Households with limited ability to meet needs

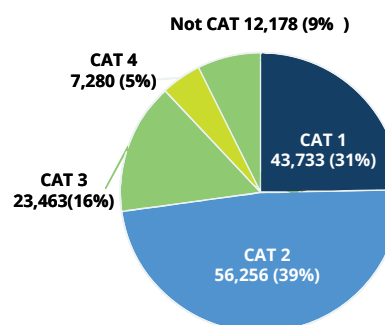
**Category 3:** Partially self-reliant households

**Category 4:** Self-reliant households

Categorization is based on multiple data sources:

- UNHCR ProGres registration data
- Enhanced Single Registry (ESR) socio-economic data
- WFP food security monitoring
- Partner livelihood data
- World Bank's forced displacement analysis
- Joint Assessment Missions
- Community consultations

### Number of households per category



**NB:** Those not categorized due to insufficient data are given a chance to report at the help desks to facilitate the review process.

## 3. Assistance Under the DA Framework

Support is tailored based on household needs and capacities per category, subject to resource availability.

### Food assistance levels:

#### February to September 2026

Category 1 : **80%** Minimum Food Basket

Category 2 : **60%** Minimum Food Basket

Category 3 : **20%** Minimum Food Basket

Other sectors that are adopting this Differentiated Assistance include:

- Livelihood and economic inclusion programmes
- Health services and social health insurance
- Shelter, water and sanitation (WASH)
- Education services
- Protection support across all categories

### Key Achievements So Far

Significant progress has been made in establishing the DA framework in 2025.

- **Strong coordination under Government leadership** DRS leads a multi-agency coordination structure with UNHCR, WFP, County government departments and partners.
- **Development of the DA Transition Framework** Guiding the shift from humanitarian support toward self-reliance.
- **Household identification and categorization methodology** Layered onto Government systems through the Enhanced Single Registry (ESR).
- **Joint Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework** Ensuring evidence-based decision making and accountability.
- **Communication and stakeholder engagement strategy** Supporting community awareness and feedback.
- **Costed livelihood assistance packages** Being refined to support economic inclusion. Including a transition framework to track progress of participants.
- **Recourse mechanism established** Allowing refugees to request review of categorization decisions.
- **Risk analysis and mitigation measures** Ensuring responsible and conflict-sensitive implementation.

### Strengthening the System

A Refugee and Host Communities Livelihoods Module hosted by DRS has been developed and is being finetuned based on feedback from stakeholders. The system aims to improve coordination.

The system will allow partners to:

- Track assistance across agencies
- Improve targeting and referrals
- Monitor household transitions between categories
- Strengthen accountability and reporting

Data sharing discussions between partners are ongoing to enable buy in by all stakeholders.

### Communication and Community Engagement

Continuous engagement with refugee communities is central to the DA approach. Information and feedback channels include:

- Community town halls
- Radio talk shows
- Bulk SMS messaging
- WhatsApp communication
- Mobile caravans
- Video messages and posters

Other stakeholders are engaged through ongoing interagency or targeted fora and info briefs

Complaints or requests are tracked through a robust database, through multiple accessible channels, including:

- **Helpdesks** operated by WFP, UNHCR and DRS in the camps
- **Toll-free helplines** (WFP: 0800 722 446)
- **SMS and email** communication (WFP SMS: 0707 722 446; Email:kenya.feedback@wfp.org)

### What's Coming Next

Key priorities for July to Dec 2026:

- The Refugee and Host Community Livelihoods Module launch event
- Commitment and onboarding partners on the data sharing agreement in support of the livelihood's module realization.
- Scaling joint fundraising for livelihoods investments
- Expanding private sector engagement and value chain development
- Strengthening the recourse mechanism
- Rolling out the Joint Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning framework
- Advocating for supportive regulatory environment for refugee livelihoods
- The Long Rains Assessment including refugees in Garissa and Turkana
- The Joint Assessment Mission

### Why It Matters

Differentiated Assistance represents a major shift in refugee support in Kenya.

By targeting assistance based on needs while investing in livelihoods and systems, the approach aims to:

- Protect the most vulnerable
- Improve the efficiency of humanitarian resources
- Support refugee self-reliance
- Strengthen coordination between government and partners