

SOMALIA OPERATIONAL UPDATE

1-28 February 2023



IDPs from Las Caanood receiving Core Relief Items in Kalabaydh. © UNHCR

OVERVIEW

In February, conflict and insecurity made the operational environment in Somalia exceedingly difficult. Political tensions in Las Caanood culminated into armed conflict, leading to civilian deaths and displacement. The conflict between Al-Shabab, hereafter referred as the non-state armed group (NSAG), and the alliance of Somali security forces, local militias, and international security partners raged on several fronts. Additionally, the extended drought continued to affect ordinary Somalis' lives and livelihoods. 234,000 internal displacements, primarily due to conflict and drought, were recorded in February.

Finding durable solutions for refugees and asylum seekers, refugee returnees, and internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in collaboration with the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), Federal Member States (FMS), and development and humanitarian partners remains one of UNHCR's top priorities in Somalia. Moreover, UNHCR in collaboration with authorities and partners, continued to provide vital protection assistance to vulnerable IDPs and host communities affected by conflict and drought. In Somalia, UNHCR leads/co-leads the Protection, Shelter, and CCCM clusters for the IDP response.

UNHCR's key achievements for the month of February are listed below:

- In Kalabaydh and Gumeys, Sool region, UNHCR, through its partners, distributed core relief items such as blankets, jerry cans, and kitchen sets to 1,450 HHs (9,000 individuals) displaced due to armed conflict in Las Caanood.
- UNHCR, through its partners, established first-ever GBV protection desks and initiated mobile outreach programme to identify and counsel GBV cases in Kalabaydh, Buuhoodle, and Erigabo districts in Somaliland.
- UNHCR, in collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP), started the pilot of biometric enrolment of IDPs using proGres v4 and Biometric Identity Management System (BIMS) targeting 2,500 IDP HHs in Beletweyne. The aim of the exercise is to improve accountability through better collection and management of IDP data, while ensuring prioritization of humanitarian assistance to reach the most vulnerable population.

KEY FIGURES

PERSONS OF CONCERN

3M # of persons of concern to UNHCR Somalia

IDPs	2,967,500
Refugee Returnees (Jan 2020 - Feb 2023)	7,322
Refugees and Asylum Seeker	35,119

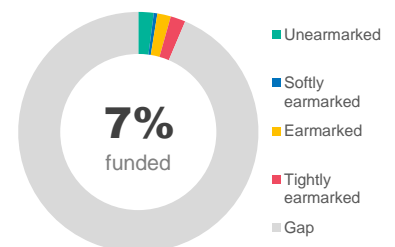
PARTNERS

30 # of partners implementing key UNHCR activities in 2023

Government	11
NGO	10
INGO	9

DONORS

174.2M Funding required for 2023 (as of 7 March)



POPULATION DATA

35,119

Refugees and asylum seekers as of February 2023

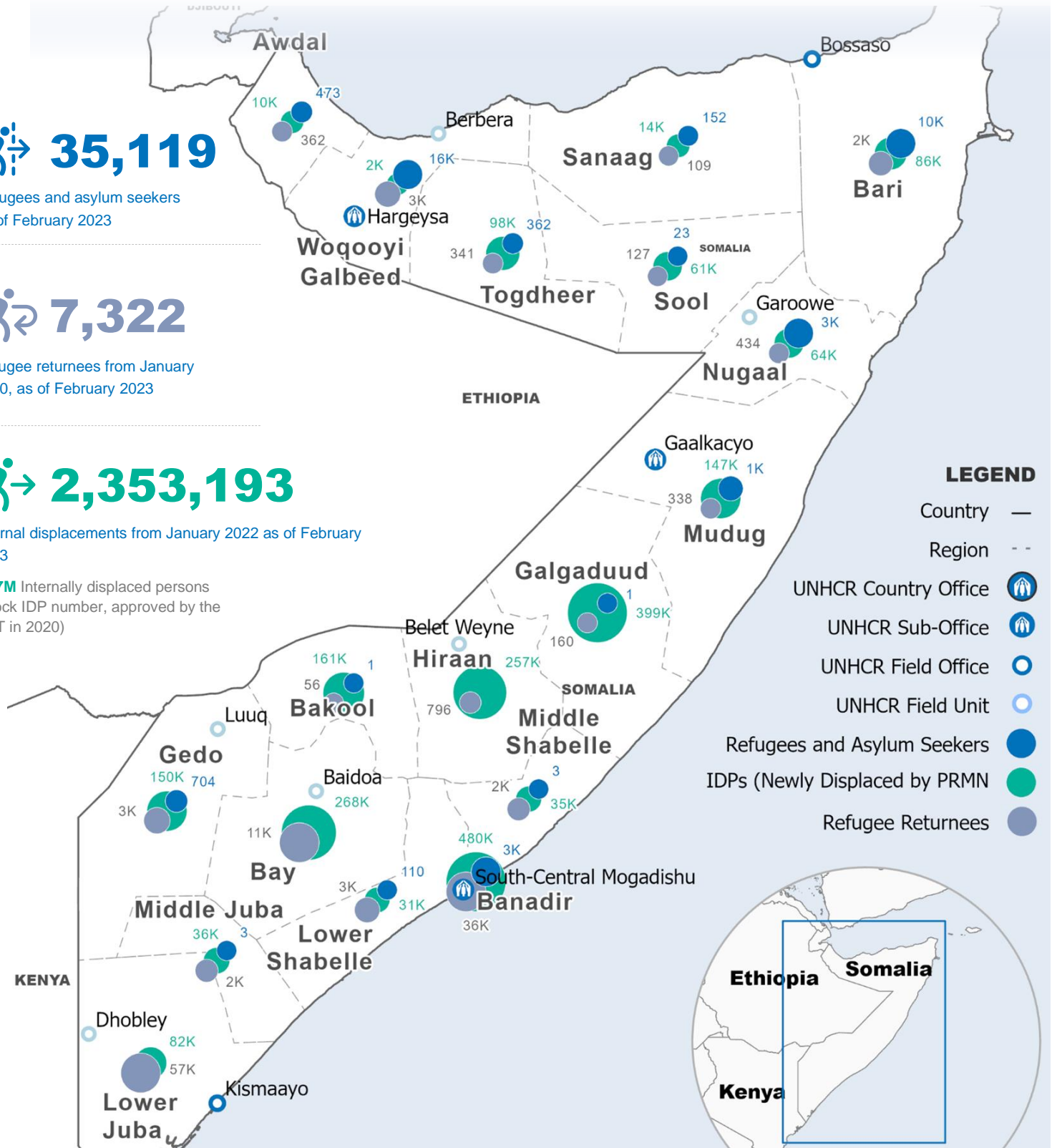
7,322

Refugee returnees from January 2020, as of February 2023

2,353,193

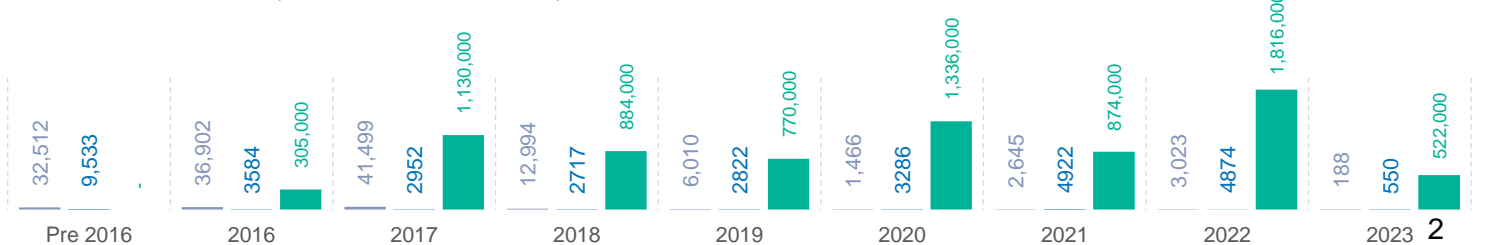
Internal displacements from January 2022 as of February 2023

2.97M Internally displaced persons (Stock IDP number, approved by the HCT in 2020)



POPULATION TREND (ARRIVALS PER YEAR)

Refugee Returnees | Refugees and Asylum Seekers | IDPs (PRMN)



Operational Context

UNHCR in Somalia continued to operate in a highly complex environment, largely characterized armed conflict, political tension, and the ongoing drought.

According to the UNHCR-led [Protection and Return Monitoring Network \(PRMN\)](http://prmn-somalia.unhcr.org/), 234,000 displacements within Somalia were recorded in February. Out of the total displacements during the reporting month, the vast majority, 62% were attributed to conflict/insecurity, 34% because of the drought, and 4% due to other reasons. The top five humanitarian needs of the displaced families were food (53%), followed by shelter (18%), and livelihood (12%). The top three regions that received the greatest number of new displacements in February were Banadir followed by Nugal and Togdheer. More up to date information about displacement and protection needs of the IDPs can be found at the new PRMN online interactive dashboard- <http://prmn-somalia.unhcr.org/>.

In February, the security situation in Somalia remained volatile. Political tension in Las Caanood boiled over resulting in armed conflict between the security forces and the armed members of a local clan, resulting in unknown number of casualties and displacement of an estimated 185,000 individuals, including those who crossed the border into Ethiopia. Access to IDP sites and Las Caanood remained difficult due to insecurity and clan dynamics. Furthermore, the armed conflict between NSAG and the coalition of Somali security forces, local militias, and international security partners continued in Hirshabelle and Galmudug, and South-West states.

Somalia continued to face the longest and the most severe drought in its recent history, due to the failure of five consecutive rainy seasons and a sixth failed rainy season has been predicted for early 2023. Reduced access to water, and the ever shrinking pasture affected pastoralist and agrarian communities throughout the region, forcing them to leave their places of origin in search of water, food, pastures, or humanitarian assistance. Shortfalls in humanitarian assistance will likely push 8.3 million people to face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse levels of food insecurity between April and June, including more than 700,000 people facing famine conditions or Catastrophe level (IPC Phase 5). The extreme conditions have resulted in higher-than normal deaths, and excess mortality will continue to accumulate unless assistance is further scaled up and sustained.¹ More than 1.3 million Somalis have been displaced internally due to drought since 2022.

Somalia hosts some 35,119 refugees and asylum-seekers, among which 70% are women and children; 31% are school-age children (6-17 years); and 26% are women and girls of reproductive age (13-49 years). The majority of refugees and asylum-seekers (67%) are from Ethiopia, followed by Yemen (29%) and Syria (4%). Most of the refugees and asylum-seekers reside in urban or peri-urban settings across Woqooyi Galbeed and Bari regions, in the northern part of the country. Furthermore, since January 2020, 7,322 former refugees have returned to Somalia from their countries of asylum, mostly from Yemen followed by Kenya. From the total refugee returnees, 2,209 individuals have been assisted by UNHCR through Voluntary Repatriation Programme from Kenya and Assisted Spontaneous Returns (ASR) Programme from Yemen.

¹ <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/humanitarian-situation-somalia-remains-extremely-serious-assistance-must-be-sustained-and-improved-continue-prevent-famine>

Update on Achievements



Protection

Prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV)

- In Sool, Sanaag, and Togdheer regions, particularly in Kalabaydh, Buuhoodle, and Erigabo districts, which host large number of IDPs, UNHCR through its partners established first-ever GBV protection desks and initiated mobile outreach programme to identify and counsel GBV cases. Furthermore, a psychosocial worker and a social worker have been deployed as frontline workers in the three districts. UNHCR Somalia has made significant progress in addressing GBV needs and gaps among IDPs in the aforementioned locations as a result of these interventions.
- UNHCR through its partner identified and/or supported 88 new and existing GBV cases in February. Services to the survivors included safe house support, psychosocial counselling, medical and legal referrals, and provision of dignity kits, among others.
- UNHCR and partners continued to raise awareness against GBV across the country. Some of the activities conducted in February are listed below:
 - To commemorate the International Zero Tolerance Day of FGM, UNHCR and its partner reached out to over 600 students, teachers, women, youth leaders, young mothers, and other members of the community in North Mudug, Puntland, to raise awareness about the health complications of FGM using dramas, pictures, and testimonies.
 - UNHCR and its partners held community awareness-raising sessions on harmful practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), child labor, and rape in Beletweyne, reaching 414 IDPs. In addition, across eight IDP sites in Bossaso, awareness session underlying factors that contribute to GBV were held, reaching 423 IDPs.
 - In 14 IDP sites across Galmudug state, outreach and protection monitoring teams raised awareness on FGM, GBV prevention, and services available for GBV cases, reaching 350 IDPs.
 - In Kismayo and Dhobley, 60 IDPs attended community dialogues on prevention and response to GBV.

Child Protection

- Through a partner, UNHCR facilitated the reunification of two migrant children with their families in Kalabaydh. Due to the Las Caanood conflict, the children were separated from their extended family members who had accompanied the children on their journey from Ethiopia.

Community engagement, awareness raising, and capacity building

- To raise public awareness about the dangers of irregular migration, or *tahriib*, UNHCR and its partners conducted community outreach and awareness activities in Bossaso, Garowe, and Galkayo, all in Puntland State, reaching over 750 people, including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, IDPs, community leaders, and youths. The activities included group presentations and discussions, distribution of information and educational materials, and sports events. The discussions included safe and alternative modes of migration including family reunification and education/scholarship opportunities among other available safe and legal pathways.
- At the Peaceful Coexistence Center (PCC) in Hargeisa, 402 individuals received counselling and case referral support. The majority of the advice sought was for financial insecurity, followed by concerns about refugee status determination (RSD) and subsistence allowance. Where appropriate, cases were referred to relevant partner for further assistance.
- UNHCR, in collaboration with a partner, held a legal information session at the University of Hargeisa to promote the legal rights of refugees and asylum seekers, the Somaliland judicial system, and peaceful coexistence and social cohesion between the host community and refugees and asylum seekers. The event was attended by 40 refugees and asylum seekers, IDPs, returnees, and influential host community members, including traditional elders and religious scholars.



Community consultation being held in Dhobley on the usefulness of existing complaint and feedback mechanism. © UNHCR

- In Hargeisa, UNHCR through its partner supported 130 refugees and asylum seekers (100 females and 30 males) with in-person and remote psychosocial counselling.

Registration, reception, and reintegration support

- In the port of Bossaso, Puntland, UNHCR and partners received 142 individuals, including 115 Somali refugee returnees and 27 Yemeni refugees. Upon arrival, 96 out of the total new arrivals requested UNHCR for assistance. Thereupon, they were accommodated at the UNHCR managed Reception Center for registration and food among other services. Similarly in Berbera, Somaliland, UNHCR and partners received three commercial boats from Yemen carrying 32 refugees and 29 Somali refugee returnees, who were all transferred to a UNHCR managed Reception Center for registration, food, accommodation, health screening, and counselling support.
- The situation in Somalia remains precarious as a result of insecurity and recurrent droughts. The returning refugees face multitude of challenges, while they try to reintegrate. There is also increased pressure on the already limited and overstretched basic services infrastructure and livelihood opportunities available in the areas of return. In order to mitigate against this limited absorption capacity that slows the pace of return and reintegration, UNHCR distributes one-time reinstallation grant and monthly subsistence allowance for up to six months to the returnees. In February, 84 refugee returnees received USD 200 each in reinstallation cash grant in Baidoa and Kismayo; and in Baidoa, 32 refugee returnees received subsistence allowance to help them meet their basic needs.



Partners receiving new arrivals from Yemen in Berbera Port. © DRC

Cash assistance

- In Somaliland, UNHCR distributed subsistence allowance to 1,090 refugee and asylum seeker households (HHs) to support them meet their monthly basic needs. In addition, 826 extremely vulnerable refugee and asylum seeker HHs also received one time cash assistance. Cash transfer for both type of assistance depends on family size and range from USD 76 to USD 114 per HH. During the cash distribution, UNHCR collected feedback from the refugees and asylum seekers on their experiences and challenges of using mobile money to receive cash assistance. Preliminary results of the feedback suggested that refugees and asylum seekers were satisfied to receive their assistance through mobile money.

Legal assistance

- UNHCR through its partner provided legal assistance to 403 refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs, and host community members. Services included legal counselling, mediation, police reporting, intervention with relevant authorities to secure the release of refugees and asylum seekers from police custody, court-related services, birth certificate and national ID issuance, provision of emergency shelter, and referral to other service providers.

Refugee Status Determination (RSD)

- In February, RSD case processing was scaled up in Somaliland. During the reporting month, UNHCR conducted 37 RSD interviews for 119 individuals, submitted 25 RSD assessments for 91 individuals, and reviewed and/or finalized 41 cases consisting of 148 individuals.



Health

- UNHCR's partners delivered primary and secondary health care services, to 1,952 individuals. Services included consultations and medical screening, laboratory investigations, medical treatments, and referrals to specialized hospitals. The health services primarily benefited refugees and asylum seekers in Mogadishu and Puntland, although some IDPs and host communities were also reached in Mogadishu.



Education

- In Mogadishu, UNHCR provided school meal support to 826 active and newly registered refugee and asylum seeker children, including 419 girls. The students received cash for meal support, which acted as an incentive to improve school attendance.
- In Garowe, UNHCR supported 100 children from Ethiopia and Yemen with tuition fees to attend evening after-class studies to improve their language skills.
- UNHCR supported the admission of 30 teachers to Jubaland Teachers Training College with the overall goal of improving educational outcomes for refugees and asylum seekers. Upon completion of the course, the teachers will be certified to teach in primary schools.
- UNHCR enrolled 30 DAFI scholars in English language training to help them improve their language skills.



Drought Response

- In Beletweyne, UNHCR, in collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP), started the pilot of biometric enrolment of IDPs using proGres v4 and Biometric Identity Management System (BIMS). The goal of the exercise is to improve accountability by better collecting and managing IDP data, while also ensuring that humanitarian assistance is prioritized to reach the most vulnerable people in need, reduce duplication of assistance, and capture IDPs with specific needs, such as female-headed households, unaccompanied and separated children, and people with disabilities. While the pilot's target population is 2,500 HHs, UNHCR plans to expand the exercise to include additional IDPs in areas such as Baidoa and Banadir. In preparation for the exercise, UNHCR had trained 20 enumerators and procured the necessary laptops and equipment.



Distribution of tools to clean and maintain IDP sites in Beletweyne. © UNHCR

- UNHCR, through its partner, conducted safety audits in 50 IDP sites in Beletweyne. The assessment's purpose was to observe and evaluate site-level security and protection risks, as well as camp infrastructure, and other services such as WASH, shelter, nutrition, health, and education. According to the preliminary findings, the majority of families require livelihood assistance, shelter, food, and clothing. The assessment also gathered data on GBV risks to women and girls. During the same time period, 50 IDP sites received tools and equipment to help site cleaning campaigns.
- UNHCR, through its partner, identified and resolved 119 housing, land, and property (HLP) disputes across IDP sites in Baidoa, including 76 disputes over land encroachments, 24 over limited resources, particularly water, and 19 over land ownership between spouses. In Baidoa, UNHCR supported 1,065 IDP HHs with multipurpose cash assistance and 258 IDP HHs with cash for NFI. All of the families supported were selected, according to their specific need and existing vulnerabilities.
- In Baidoa, UNHCR's Protection Desk monitors conducted community awareness raising on available services and referral pathways to access such services, reaching 410 individuals in five locations. The monitors received and referred 156 cases involving issues such as a lack of food, livelihoods, cash assistance, health care, and water, among other things.
- Based on referrals from the Protection Desks in four IDP sites, UNHCR, through its partner, plans to distribute emergency shelter kits (ESKs) to 295 HHs in Galkayo.
- In Luglow, Kismayo, and Dollow, UNHCR has identified 1,400 vulnerable IDP HHs who will receive one-time multi-purpose cash assistance to help them meet their basic needs, with each HH receiving USD 100.
- As a part of UNHCR's GBV prevention and response for drought affected displaced population in Bossaso and Garowe, 400 IDP and 400 refugee and asylum seeker HHs were identified to receive dignity kits.



Shelter and NFI

- In Puntland, UNHCR delivered its first relief assistance to IDPs displaced from Las Caanood to Kalabaydh town (28 km south of Las Caanood) through its partner, distributing core relief item (CRI) kits containing blankets, collapsible jerricans, a solar lamp, plastic sheets, sleeping mats, and a kitchen set, among others, to 950 HHs (5,700 individuals). Moreover, in Gumeys, Sool region, UNHCR overcame access challenges and distributed CRIs to 500 HHs (3,297 individuals) with the help of a partner and the local community. Plans are also in the works to distribute an additional 2,500 CRIs to IDPs from Las Caanood living in various parts of Puntland and Somaliland.
- In Borama, Somaliland, UNHCR handed over newly built transitional shelters to 55 IDP HHs. In order to facilitate durable solutions through the integration of the IDP families, who have been displaced for an extended period of time, into the community, the local government also provided land title deeds to the families who received the shelter assistance.
- UNHCR has turned over the newly built immigration offices in Wajaale and Goroyo Awl to the local authorities in Borama. The two border towns are important border crossings with Ethiopia and had seen a substantial influx of people during the most recent displacement that was caused by turmoil within Ethiopia.




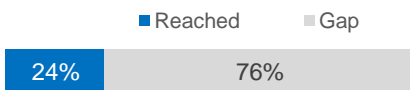
Newly constructed immigration center in Wajaale. © UNHCR



Cluster Coordination and Leadership



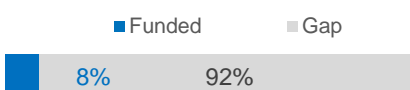
771.8K

 # of beneficiaries reached by the Protection Cluster



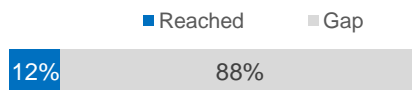
5 M  People in need

3.2 M  People targeted

211 M  Funding required



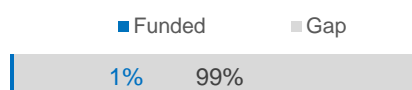
171K

 # of beneficiaries reached by the Shelter Cluster



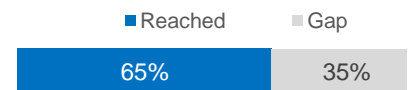
4.9 M  People in need

1.4 M  People targeted

85 M  Funding required



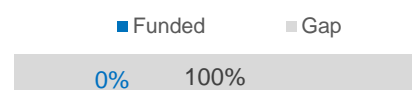
1.6M

 # of beneficiaries reached by the CCCM Cluster


2.8 M  People in need

2.45 M  People targeted

66 M  Funding required



Protection Cluster

- The Protection Cluster developed a rapid protection assessment tool, which is a checklist to be filled using observation technique. Two key partners in South-West State were trained, and the tool will be embedded in the Integrated First-line Response, as a pilot.

- The Protection Cluster trained front line staff from the Food, Nutrition, Health, WASH, camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) and Shelter clusters in Baidoa. The content on the training included psychological first aid (PFA), protection mainstreaming, centrality of protection, accountability to affected populations, and procedures on disclosure of GBV or CP incidents. These areas of focus are intended to provide front line staffs with the knowledge to respond to cases in hard-to-reach areas or areas with limited presence of protection partners.
- The Protection Cluster participated in a day mission, which was organized by the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG), to Adan Yabaal, a recently liberated town, to assess the affected individuals and the overall humanitarian situation. Family separation, lack of victim assistance for those affected by explosive hazards, barriers to accessing services, and high rates of school dropouts were among the most often reported protection concerns.

Shelter Cluster

- The Shelter Cluster partners reached 78,385 individuals with NFIs and 8,513 individuals with shelter assistance in February. Cumulatively in 2023, 171,006 individuals or 12% of the targeted population have received Shelter or NFI assistance from the cluster partners.
- Shelter remains one of the top priority needs of the displaced population. Around 4.9 million people are in need of shelter and NFI assistance in Somalia.

Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster

- During the reporting period, CCCM Cluster partners conducted site verification assessments to authenticate existing IDP sites and to rule out fake ones in three districts. In Baidoa, 611 sites with 107,337 HHs (649,465 individuals), in Beletweyne 119 sites with 16,333 HH (94,406 individuals), and in Taleex district of Sool region 4 sites with 1,440 HHs (8,640 individuals) were assessed.
- Site monitoring activities were conducted across 1,438 IDP sites covering 33 districts under the administration of 19 partners. Overall, 57% of the sites had good access to water; 47% of the sites had education facilities within a 20-minute walking range; 79% had health facilities; and 69% had nutrition facilities. Moreover, 91% of the sites were made up of emergency shelters. Only 16% of households received cash or food assistance within the last 6 months, according to the respondents.
- Most of the complaints raised through the CCCM-managed complaint and feedback mechanism in February across 28 districts were for food and livelihood (4,646), which made up 61% of the total issues recorded, followed by shelter (898), and WASH (660), which made up 12% and 9% of the total issues recorded, respectively. The highest number of issues filed in February were in Kismayo, with 32%, followed by Mogadishu-Deynille, with 16%, and Dollow, with 12%.
- The CCCM Cluster partners conducted 235 site-level stakeholder coordination meetings in Dinsoor, Hudur, Afgoye, and Qansaxdhere, all in South-West State, and discussed service delivery and advocacy for drought-displaced new arrivals. In addition, partners held site-level meetings with camp management committees (CMCs) and community members in Garowe, Qardo, and Bossaso in Puntland to allocate space to construct shelters and facilitate access to existing services for the newly displaced population.
- To enhance communication with communities, the CCCM Cluster partners conducted orientation sessions on available humanitarian services, including conducting awareness-raising about available services during malnutrition screening for newly displaced IDPs from Las Caanood in Garowe, Buuhoodle, Qardo, and Galkayo. The partners also carried out door to door sessions and public awareness-raising campaigns in IDP sites, coupled with the distribution of posters and the erecting of billboards in several sites, with the intention of providing reliable information on available services; a total of 12,590 participants attended these sessions.
- The CCCM Cluster partners conducted site decongestion activities to improve access and mitigate the risk of fire in congested sites, waste disposal management and drainage systems. The partners carried out a total of 548 site improvement activities, including regular site cleanup campaigns to collect garbage/wastes using Cash for Work approach by engaging site maintenance committees and community volunteers.

Financial Information

Total recorded contributions for the Somalia Operation in 2023 amount to **US\$ 11.6 million**. UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have already contributed to the Somalia Operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds.

External / Donors Relations

Thanks to the donors of earmarked contributions to Somalia Operation in 2023 | USD

CERF 3.2 million | **Japan** 3.1 million | **World Food Programme** 0.5 million

Denmark | Other private donors

Thanks to the donors of softly earmarked contributions to UNHCR in 2023 | USD

Canada 3.9 million

Norway | Private donors

Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted funds to UNHCR in 2023 | USD

Sweden 77.6 million | **Norway** 63.1 million | **Denmark** 35.6 million | **Netherlands** 34.1 million | **Germany** 23.1 million | **Switzerland** 18.9 million | **Belgium** 11.9 million | **Ireland** 11.9 million

Algeria | Australia | Bulgaria | Canada | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Philippines | Republic of Korea | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Thailand | Türkiye | Uruguay | Private donors

CONTACTS

Magatte Guisse, Representative, UNHCR Somalia

guisse@unhcr.org, Cell: +252 611 634 665 (Somalia)

LINKS

Somalia: Global Focus | Somalia: Data Portal | UNHCR Somalia | @UNHCRSom



From
the People of Japan

