

# **Somali refugee displacements in the near region: Analysis and Recommendations**

## **Paper for the UNHCR Global Initiative on Somali Refugees**

By Laura Hammond<sup>1</sup>

### **I. Purpose, content and scope of the paper**

This paper is prepared for a regional meeting of representatives of the governments of Somalia and the major countries in the region currently hosting Somali refugees – namely Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Yemen - to be convened by UNHCR in August 2014. The meeting forms part of a Global Initiative that the High Commissioner for refugees has launched to rally international support for creative, meaningful and transformative solutions for Somali refugees.

Intended to provide context and lay the ground for in-depth discussion, the paper overviews the nature, trends and issues in Somali refugee displacement in the near region while also touching on the pertinent aspects of Somali refugee displacement in other parts of Africa, the Gulf States and further afield. It provides a brief overview of the history and evolution of the estimated 1 million refugees in the region. Individual sections on each host country, outlining the main challenges and opportunities facing the hosts, are provided. Consideration is also given to the situation inside Somalia today and the challenges the country faces in terms of managing internal displacement and that of receiving large numbers of returnees. An attempt is made to highlight the heterogeneity within each of the host country refugee populations, since it is clear that different groups of refugees have different risk and opportunity profiles when it comes to durable solutions. Some refugees have been displaced for three generations; others are recent arrivals. Past actions in managing displacement and return in the region are reviewed and the conditions facing Somali refugees examined. It becomes clear that varying solutions may have to be pursued for different groups and some situations may have more or fewer options than others.

On the basis of the analysis provided, the paper considers recommendations to better manage the consequences of refugee hosting and to find meaningful solutions to displacement. Many of these recommendations are drawn from a High Level Panel that was convened by the High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva in November 2013 in the initial phase of the Global Initiative. The panel brought together prominent academics, practitioners, advocates and personalities and representatives of the private sector, the UN, major international refugee assistance and humanitarian organizations and the Somali diaspora itself.<sup>2</sup>

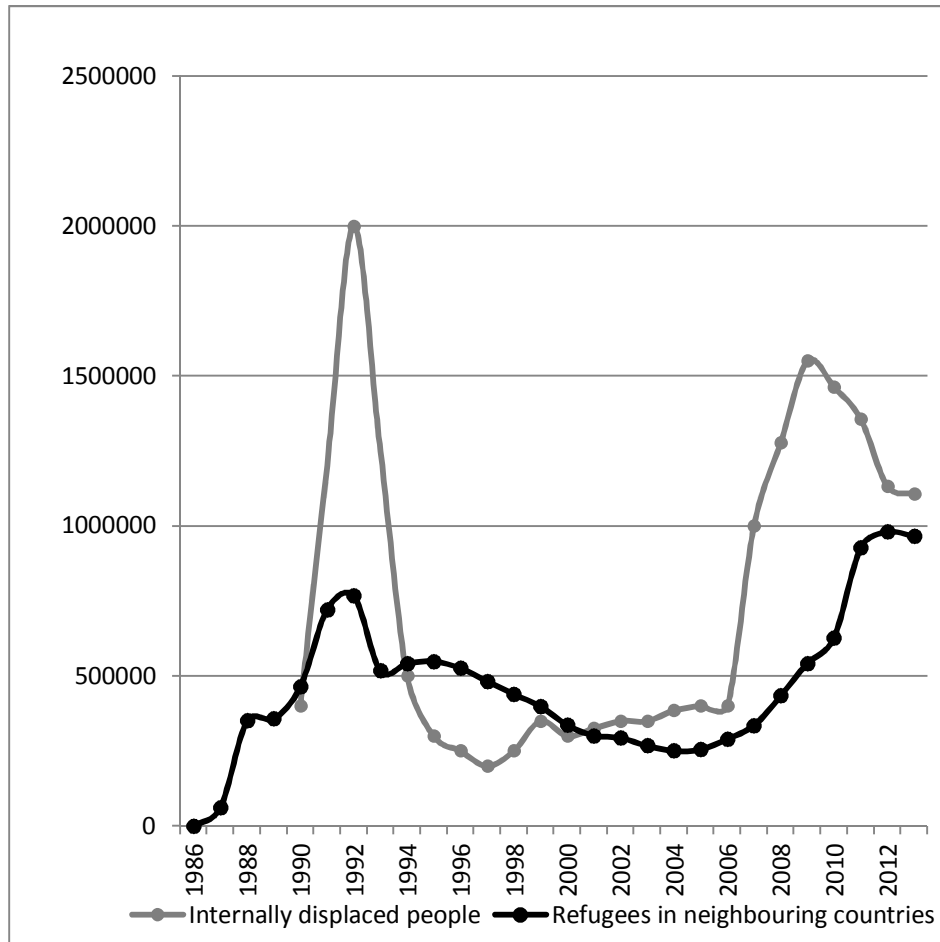
### **II. History of Somali displacement, with particular focus on refugees**

#### **a. General trends**

Somalia is often viewed as the scene of ceaseless violence and displacement since the collapse of the state in 1991. However, the interplay of conflict and displacement has seen different phases, configurations and evolutions. Prior to the genesis of the displacement that has endured to the present day, Somalia was itself a major refugee hosting country, home to an estimated 650,000 Ethiopian Somalis from the 1977-78 border war with Ethiopia. Those most affected were people living close to the contested border where the fighting was concentrated. The large numbers of refugees in the country contributed to a distortion of Somalia's national economy as the Government's use of aid resources as a major source of revenue played an important role in incorporating aid into the political economy of Somalia, a trend that has continued to this day.

The genesis of contemporary Somali displacement is indicated in Figure 1 below which shows the fluctuations in the total numbers of people displaced since the mid-1980s. The graph shows peaks in both internal displacement and refugee flows during the early 1990s at the onset of the conflict and state collapse and between 2007 and 2012 when escalated fighting and drought conditions contributed to widespread famine and emergency conditions. It also shows periods of relative calm when migration slowed and returns to some areas were possible.

**Figure 1: Somalia displacement estimates**



Source: A. Lindley and L. Hammond (2014) 'Histories and Contemporary Challenges of Somali Crisis and Mobility' in A. Lindley, ed. *Crisis and Migration*, Abingdon: Routledge.<sup>3</sup>

The first significant refugee displacements out of Somalia started with the events that would lead to the collapse of President Siad Barre's regime in 1991. Since then, Somali refugees and internally displaced persons have remained the most consistently protracted displaced population in the Horn of Africa. However, migration and mobility have featured as key elements in the political and economic history of the region for much longer. Since at least the 1970s, Somalis have been displaced at varying scales in response to different dynamics involving conflict, natural disaster, and economic hardship.

**b. Initial phase of Somali refugee displacement: 1988 - 1991 and after**

The principal causes of displacement during the 1990s are usually identified as a complex emergency involving conflict, state collapse and drought. However, beneath these banner headlines, it is

important to look for the ways that such dynamics impacted different groups within the country. In the build-up to the collapse of the state, the government's manipulation of clan loyalties and relations made clan identity a principal source of insecurity, conflict and access to political power (both formal and informal) and resources. The establishment of state boundaries in the post-colonial period also meant that many clans and sub-clans occupied territory that spanned two countries and thus were able to exploit economic, social and citizenship ties and claims in multiple countries.

As the state of Somalia began to fragment, and, in the period following the collapse, people withdrew into their clans for security even as warlords and clan militia leaders fomented rivalries to further their own quest for power and resources. Violent clashes between clans, combined with the effects of a severe drought led to the death of an estimated 250,000 Somalis during the 1992-93 emergency and sent others fleeing for safer areas either in urban centres in the country or in neighbouring countries. As many as 800,000 refugees fled to Kenya and Ethiopia in 1992.<sup>4</sup> Nearly 2 million people were displaced internally.

#### *b.1. Displacement to Ethiopia*

The civil war that ultimately ousted President Mohamed Siad Barre and brought down the government began in 1988 in the northwest of the country, the former British Protectorate of Somaliland. The rebel Somali National Movement (SNM) mounted attacks against the Government which for its part staged land and air campaigns against towns throughout Somaliland, causing people to flee westward to Ethiopia and northward to Djibouti.

By 1991, the number of registered refugees in Ethiopia totaled 628,526.<sup>5</sup> Most of them were from Somaliland and other parts of northern Somalia who had fled this early fighting. The refugees were assisted in nine camps established largely along clan lines with smaller numbers self-settled in local communities. Significant numbers of destitute Ethiopian Somalis who shared clan ties with the refugees also moved into the camps and registered as refugees.<sup>6</sup> The camps also received some Ethiopian nationals who had originally fled to Somalia and were now re-displaced back to their country of origin. However, many of the Ethiopian refugees who participated in this "self-repatriation under duress" settled in local communities.<sup>7</sup> UNHCR organized an assistance programme – including cash grants and six months food rations – to help over 550,000 Ethiopian returnees integrate into local communities.

Refugees arrived in Ethiopia on foot in the camps located just across the border having traveled for weeks without adequate food or water, destitute and now reliant on refugee assistance. It took nearly a year for emergency conditions to be brought under control. High rates of malnutrition and mortality in Hartisheik A, the largest of the camps, were attributed to inadequate and irregular rations, high incidence of communicable diseases (including diarrhea and hepatitis) and low enrolment in supplementary feeding programmes.<sup>8</sup>

Even after the initial emergency conditions in the camps had stabilized, life was difficult for the refugees. Relief distributions were sometimes sporadic, and most of the camps were located in remote areas away from any significant infrastructure or market. Over time, Hartisheik camp became an urbanized catchment unto itself sitting close to the border and a major transit point for agricultural products and imported items from outside the region.

Fighting in Somaliland began to subside in the early 1990s. Encouraged by improvements in security and wanting to escape the harshness of the camps in Ethiopia, an estimated 400,000 refugees

returned on their own without assistance between 1991 and 94.<sup>9</sup> However, large-scale assisted repatriation was not possible until 1997 due to a resurgence of fighting during 1994 and 1995 in Hargeisa (see further below).

### *b.2. Displacement to Djibouti*

While the largest number of people displaced from Somaliland fled to Ethiopia, over 90,000 refugees – mostly from the Issa clan – sought shelter in three camps in Djibouti.<sup>10</sup> For a country of only half a million people that was already hosting another 13,000 refugees from Ethiopia and facing an inflation rate of 60 percent,<sup>11</sup> this was an extremely heavy burden. The Government was thus initially reluctant to recognize the refugees from Somalia or to establish camps and the first refugee arrivals depended mostly on support from relatives to survive. A strict interpretation of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees was applied, placing emphasis on proof of individual persecution rather than the more broadly applicable 1969 Organisation of African Unity definition which recognized all members of specific groups facing risk for refugee-related reasons. The original government policy also allowed no permanent integration for the refugees from Somalia. However, as the numbers of Somali refugees grew, the government began to seek support from the international community. An appeal was made for support from UNHCR and in 1990 the European Union provided US\$114,000 in emergency refugee assistance.<sup>12</sup>

### *b.3. Spread of the Conflict and Displacement to Kenya and Yemen*

As momentum against the Somali government grew, efforts to remove Siad Barre from power and to seize control of the state intensified. The conflict spread to Puntland and South Central Somalia, causing accelerated displacement towards Kenya, and from Puntland through the port of Bossaso and smaller ports to Yemen. Between 1991 and 1992, the number of refugees in Kenya increased by nearly 280,000. Refugee numbers in Yemen doubled from 30,000 to 60,000. Drought in 1991 and 1992 exacerbated the effects of the violence and disrupted food production, availability of water for human and animal use, local markets and income from international trade. Pastoral and labour migration had long been “normal” coping strategies but such movement became impossible given the fighting going on in the country. This caused malnutrition and mortality rates to skyrocket and people to abandon their homes. One survey of a displaced camp in Baidoa town in Central Somalia reported under-five mortality rates of 69/10,000 persons/day - 35 times higher than the emergency threshold - caused by malnutrition, measles and dysentery.<sup>13</sup>

It is important to recognize the ways that the conflict and drought affected Somalis with different livelihood backgrounds since this influenced the composition of the refugee population. While displacement was occurring from all parts of Somalia, those from the South-Central regions were particularly hard-hit, coming as they did from agricultural and agro-pastoral areas and thus relying on access to farmland and to agricultural markets more than their northern pastoralist neighbours. The south is also more heterogeneous in terms of clan makeup, and fighting between clans often resulted in the seizure of clan territories which deprived people of their main source of subsistence, forcing more people to engage in distress migration. So-called minority clan members – members of the Rahanweyn clan group and those who have come to be known as Somali Bantu or *Jareer* were particularly disadvantaged, lacking a political voice or armed militias to protect their interests. Their exclusion has continued to the present day, and their numbers are disproportionately reflected in refugee populations in neighbouring countries.

#### *b.4. Refugees to Kenya*

Kenya had hosted approximately 30,000 Somali refugees prior to March 1991. Within a year, the number soared to nearly 300,000. The challenges of hosting them were compounded by displacements from South Sudan and Ethiopia at the same time. Refugee camps were established beginning in 1991 and were located close to the border with Somalia and along the coast. The Kenyan government was reluctant to relocate the refugees further inland due to internal security concerns. Emergency conditions in the camps prevailed until 1993, with high levels of malnutrition and outbreaks of measles, cholera and other diseases causing the deaths of many who were already weak. Security, too, was also highly problematic. In 1993, Human Rights Watch documented high incidences of rape, physical attack and theft in the camps. The perpetrators included local populations who were “as indigent as the refugee population but...not receiving relief assistance”,<sup>14</sup> as well as fellow refugees and well-armed bandits from inside Somalia.

#### *b.5. Refugees to Yemen*

Boat crossings from Somalia to Yemen increased during this period. Yemen hosted 30,000 refugees in 1991. That number doubled the following year, beginning a long and tragic story involving thousands of people drowning or falling victim to unscrupulous smugglers. In response to the influx, UNHCR began operations in Yemen for Somali refugees in 1992. As will be seen below, these numbers would increase significantly over the next two decades.

### **c. Repatriation, resettlement, and the normality of camp life 1994 - 96**

Health and nutrition conditions in the Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti camps improved from 1993 as a result of improved assistance to refugees. However, the improving picture caused donor support to begin to wane. This, together with a modest improvement in security conditions inside Somalia and return of the rains, encouraged some people to repatriate relatively soon. Between 1992 and 1994, UNHCR carried out a Cross Border Operation into areas of southern Somalia in order to prepare for and facilitate return of the refugees. 360 Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) were put in place with a value of US\$7.9 million out of an overall budget for return and rehabilitation of \$35.6 million. It is estimated that more than 170,000 people were assisted to repatriate during this period. While some remained inside the country, many found return unsustainable and eventually - after a poor harvest or escalation of violence - made their way back into Kenya (see Lindley and Hammond 2014).

In 1994, six camps were closed in Kenya as a result of the repatriation and some relocation of people to the Dadaab and Kakuma camps<sup>15</sup>. A 1996 evaluation of the Cross Border Operation however noted that while successful in encouraging people to return, the effectiveness of the operation was hampered in several ways. Three of the most important limitations of the operation were a) the likelihood of deteriorating security conditions inside Somalia, thereby triggering fresh displacement; b) the short-term impact of most of the QIPs such that they were unlikely to be sustained by local administrations or communities who were more concerned with their immediate survival, and c) a lack of collaboration with other organizations with a mandate for rehabilitation and development, meaning that “UNHCR in effect launched the project alone”.<sup>16</sup>

Back in the camps in Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti, the refugees who remained adapted to life there, however precarious and insecure. Unable for the most part to move legally and freely, seek employment, or engage in farming or livestock rearing outside the camps, a sort of urbanized, subsidized existence developed. Some found ways of supplementing their support from ration entitlements by working informally. Schools and clinics were set up to support the refugees. Resettlement to third countries (mostly to the United States, as well as Australia, Canada, and some European Union countries) was implemented throughout this period but benefitted only a relatively small number of refugees.

#### **d. 1996 - 2006: Relative calm yet a still vulnerable population**

From 1996 to 2006, a period of relative calm prevailed in Somalia. The number of new arrivals in the refugee camps slowed as people relocated on their own to urban centres inside the host countries or returned to Somalia to try to resume their agricultural or agro-pastoral activities or take their chances in the larger Somali cities and towns. Many of those displaced from Somaliland were encouraged to return by the establishment of the Government of Somaliland and an end to the civil war there. In the southern and central regions, pockets of stability developed where effective local administrative structures were established by communities themselves. What violence prevailed was relatively short-term and localized. However, one of the negative hallmarks of this time was the entrenchment of humanitarian aid inside Somalia as a key resource that could be manipulated for personal or political gain by those who had access to it.<sup>17</sup>

With the slowing of displacement from Somalia to neighbouring countries and recognition that conditions in some parts of the country had improved considerably, the late 1990s featured a focus on organized return of approximately 200,000 refugees<sup>18</sup> from Ethiopia to Somaliland. In addition, 19,000 refugees were voluntarily repatriated from Djibouti to Somaliland between 2002 and 2007.<sup>19</sup> UNHCR distributed cash grants, food assistance for a period of nine months and limited household items to returnees who were supported by the Somaliland Ministry of Rehabilitation, Reintegration and Reconstruction (MRRR). Their return was facilitated by provision of hundreds of QIPS between 1997 and 2005. Many of these projects were criticized for lack of sustainability and failing to make a difference in ensuring that returnees had access to basic services and livelihoods.

Security concerns and lack of administrative capacity prevented large-scale return of people from Kenya to South Central Somalia although smaller numbers went back from Ethiopia and Kenya to Puntland and from Djibouti to Mogadishu. Life after return proved particularly challenging given the extremely vulnerable state of the civilians and their inability to provide support to their returning relatives. Many people repatriated from refugee camps to Somalia only to become internally displaced persons living in destitution in and around urban centres. In 2014, thousands of former returnees remain encamped in settlements around the major towns of Somaliland and Puntland.<sup>20</sup>

#### **e. Renewed displacement: 2006 - 2012**

The relative calm that had prevailed for a decade was shattered in the latter half of 2006. The Union of Islamic Courts, which had begun to set up an administration in Mogadishu and some of the larger cities and which had enjoyed widespread support in many parts of Somalia was ousted by Ethiopian troops with support from its international strategic partners.

This perceived invasion of Somalia by a foreign army served as a rallying point for the emerging al Shabaab movement. Al Shabaab was a new configuration of hardline militias that had previously been active in Wahabist-Salafist movements in the country. It took as its *raison d'être* the defense of Somalia against what it called the aggression of foreign invaders. The violence began to escalate dramatically from the beginning of 2007, with indiscriminate violence particularly in and around Mogadishu prompting many people, who had managed to survive in the city for years despite the insecurity, to flee making this the most violent period in Mogadishu since the collapse of the state.

Many people fled in stages, seeking refuge first with their rural relatives and, when the coping strategies of these hosts became exhausted, both those displaced from the cities and their hosts began the move out of the country towards the refugee camps in Kenya and Ethiopia.<sup>21</sup>

The Ethiopian military withdrew from Somalia at the end of 2009. With the Transitional Federal Government controlling only a very small space within Mogadishu around the Presidential “Villa Somalia” and unable to provide protection or assistance to areas where vulnerability was worsening, al Shabaab gained ground widely throughout the country.

By July 2011, the serious drought that had been building over the previous two years and the economic effects of the conflict and restrictions on movement and trade that had gripped much of South Central Somalia for the preceding four years resulted in the emergence of the worst famine the region had seen for 25 years. The interriverine areas of Somalia (between the Juba and Shabelle rivers) which are normally the most productive agricultural areas of the country were the worst affected. The use of mobility for strategic interests by warring parties continued: al Shabaab tried to prevent people from leaving the country, attacking refugees on their way to the Kenyan and Ethiopian borders, and even carrying out attacks inside the Dadaab refugee complex. The Transitional Federal Government, with support from AMISOM troops, continued to try to attract people to areas under its control by offering assistance to people in the few places to which it had access. As a result, people poured into urban IDP centres on such a scale that the government lacked the capacity to respond effectively. By June 2012, ICRC reported that there were 368,288 IDPs living in Mogadishu, 40% of whom had come into the city within the preceding 12 months.<sup>22</sup>

These dynamics were abetted by international donor policies that prevented aid agencies from disbursing funds that might end up in the hands of al Shabaab and by al Shabaab’s decisions to ban most agencies working in areas it controlled. WFP withdrew from providing food to areas of Southern Somalia outside TFG control in January 2010, leaving ICRC as the main provider of food aid until it too was banned by al Shabaab in January 2012. This effectively meant that as needs increased, the areas worst affected by famine were out of most aid agencies’ reach. Some NGOs were able to work in areas under al Shabaab control provided they did so quietly and on a small scale. However, those providing food aid and medical support (particularly vaccination) faced resistance from al Shabaab which saw their assistance as undermining local resilience and being politically motivated.

The result of these combined factors was massive displacement within the region: 113,500 new arrivals were registered in the Dadaab camps between January and August 2011. In Ethiopia, which had been hosting 40,000 refugees in two camps near Dolo Ado during 2009 and 2010, 100,000 new arrivals were recorded during the first eight months of 2011 and additional refugees were being sheltered in camps near the city of Jijiga in the east. The Ethiopian government established three new camps to house the new arrivals but emergency conditions prevailed until at least three months after the declaration of a famine in July. A nutritional assessment of the Dolo Ado camps cited early surveys among the new arrivals showing global acute malnutrition (GAM) rates of 50% (15% is considered indicative of a serious emergency) and severe acute malnutrition (SAM) rates of approximately 23%. Mortality rates for children under five were twice the level indicating an emergency, at 4/10,000/day. These indicators underlined just how severely weakened the population was when it arrived in the camps. It took three months for emergency conditions to be brought under control.<sup>23</sup>

#### **f. The post-transitional period: 2012 to the present**

In September 2011, al Shabaab carried out a “tactical withdrawal” from most of Mogadishu under pressure from TFG and AMISOM forces. The TFG/AMISOM forces went on to gain control of many of the larger towns in the south over the following twelve months. These gains were accompanied by a political process that brought about an end to the transitional period in September 2012 and the selection of a new Parliament, President, Prime Minister and Cabinet. In September 2012, al

Shabaab’s final remaining urban base, Kismayo, was captured by Somali Federal Government (SFG)/AMISOM forces.

At the time of writing, the Somali Federal Government with the support of AMISOM is in control of the major urban areas in South Central Somalia. Al Shabaab, however, still controls large swathes of rural territory. Through regular attacks in Mogadishu, Kismayo and other cities in Somalia, as well as attacks in Kenya and Uganda, it has demonstrated that it is still a potent regional security threat.

Following the ejection of al Shabaab from Kismayo in September 2012, a power struggle ensued over the administration of Jubbaland, an area of southwestern Somalia which lies along the Kenya border and which includes Kismayo. In August 2013, an agreement was signed between the Somali Federal Government and Jubbaland President Ahmed Mohamed Islam (Madoobe). There is hope that greater security in Jubbaland may make it possible for refugees to return to it. While this vision may hold some merit for the long term, relations between the Federal Government and the regional administration are still being established. Successful return will depend upon putting in place the necessary services and ensuring that relief and development organizations have access to the area to support returnees and local communities. These challenges of realizing a functioning federal system are also key to promoting governance and return in other areas.

Despite the challenges the new government faces, the post-transition period has brought renewed but cautious optimism about the future of the country. The number of new arrivals in neighbouring countries has fallen. Some host countries, encouraged by the Government’s successes and being attentive as well to public pressure over the terrorist attacks for which Al Shabaab has claimed responsibility, have urged the acceleration of return to their country of the Somali refugees. Perhaps out of optimism, but also likely in reaction to growing intolerance towards them and to the insecurity they have experienced in the refugee camps (see below), many refugees are preparing themselves for the possibility of some form of return. As will be discussed below, significant obstacles to realizing this ambition remain.

### III. Issues and problematics

Today, it is estimated that at least 1.5 million Somalis out of a total national population of approximately 10 million live outside the country in what may be termed both the “near” and “far” diasporas. Some 1 million of those people live in or close to the Horn of Africa Region. The current Somali refugee populations in the main host countries in the region can be seen in the table below:

Host Country	Somali Refugee Pop. as of 10 July 2014
Kenya	427,812
Ethiopia	244,340
Yemen	233,723
Djibouti	19,799
Uganda	18,534
Total	943,578

*Source: UNHCR, Refugees in the Horn of Africa: Somali Displacement Crisis Information Sharing Portal, 10 July 2014.*

The main issues and challenges confronting these refugees and the countries hosting them will now be examined below. Analysis is given on a country by country basis, although it is recognized that many of the issues are cross-cutting and apply to more than one country context. The section also



considers the challenges faced by the Government of Somalia in emerging from conflict and preparing for the return of large numbers of refugees.

**a. Policy contexts in host countries**

*a.1. Kenya*

Somali refugees have been admitted into Kenya and granted refugee status throughout the period since the collapse of the Siad Barre Government in 1991 triggered their massive exodus.. For years, UNHCR coordinated the overall response to this emergency. With the passage of the country's Refugee Act in 2006, overall responsibility to co-ordinate refugee response and management shifted fully to the Government (GOK). Collaborating accordingly with UNHCR, the Government exercises overall management of refugee affairs and manages registration, security and overall coordination of operational delivery. A number of NGOs are involved in the delivery of assistance and policy, legal, protection and solutions advocacy.

More than half of the refugees in Dadaab refugee camp belong to one of the Darod sub-clans, with 12% each belonging to Dir and Hawiye and 6% Bantu. One third of Kakuma's population is reported to be Bantu, 20% Hawiye and less than one quarter Darod<sup>24</sup>.

It is estimated that there are slightly more women in the camps than men and that more than half of the refugees living in the camps in Kenya are under 18 years of age<sup>25</sup>. Approximately 10,000 refugees are reportedly "third generation": they and their parents were born in the camps, and their families have lived there for two decades.

Since the inception of the Somali refugee programme in Kenya, Government policy has required that refugees should reside in the designated refugee camps, principally Dadaab although there is now also a large number of Somali refugees in Kakuma Refugee camp. Movement from the camps is subject to the requirement of "movement passes" issued by the Government. While, indeed, refugees have been able to move from the camps in this manner, for the majority, movement from or living legally from the camps has been very restricted. With likewise restricted legal right to work outside the camps no access to farmland, serious over-crowding of the camps beyond their original planned capacity, periodic disruptions in distribution of essential relief supplies over the last several years, and episodes of insecurity and attacks by al Shabaab and bandits which have affected refugees, aid workers and Government law enforcement personnel and resulted in momentary suspension or restriction of assistance operations, conditions in the camps have made for a precarious existence even for the many than engage in petty trade or small businesses. Thousands have thus sought to take their chances by working or living illegally in the cities with relatives. A vibrant economic and social dynamic thus exists between the refugee camps and urban areas of Kenya.

What has been a complex policy and protection management situation from the very inception, including on the question of freedom of movement in and out of the camps into the urban areas has been compounded by the terrorist attacks and other very serious security incidents in Nairobi, Mombasa, towns in the northeast of the country and indeed within Dadaab refugee camp itself which have escalated over the last four years for which the Somali-based al Shabaab has claimed responsibility. Overall, the public opinion against Somalis which these incidents have reinforced have restricted even more the overall political and social environment for dealing with the Somali refugee question in Kenya. On the other hand, measures taken to secure national security and public safety, including of the refugees themselves in the face of these threats have clearly impacted the protection situation of the refugees and limited the room for maneuver for solutions.

In December 2012, directly referencing the context of insecurity posed by the terrorism threats and attacks, the Government issued a directive requiring all refugees living in the urban areas in the country to move to the refugee camps. Both by the eminence of their numbers and also as witnessed in the measures taken initially to implement this directive, it would impact most of all the more than 50,000 Somali refugees residing in the different urban areas of the country, particularly Nairobi. The directive was however quashed by the High Court in a ruling issued in July 2013. In March 2014, another similar directive was reinstated. The decision was followed up with “Operation Usalama” involving roundup of undocumented foreigners (Somali and others) living in the cities. Several hundreds of refugees were caught up in this operation although many were released following UNHCR interventions while others were relocated to Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps. Some 350 Somali nationals were deported to Somalia. While the Government assured UNHCR that Somalis recognized as refugees would not be deported, some six registered refugees were returned as part of this operation. The roundup also gave rise to a number of protection and humanitarian concerns and suffering which UNHCR and other stakeholders have taken up and continue to address with the Government particularly to ensure that international protection standards are adhered to. In July 2014, a High Court decision upheld the government directive.

Somali refugees, especially those from the 2011 drought, have indeed spontaneously returned to Somalia soon after conditions began to improve in order to regain ownership of land and resume their farming and trading activities, although a 2013 report by the Heritage Institute for Policy Studies, a think-tank based in Mogadishu, contended that many of the estimated 15,000 refugees who had by then returned had been prompted more by concern about insecurity in the camps than by optimism about the conditions facing them inside Somalia on their return<sup>26</sup>. It is clearly a highly mixed situation in which, on one hand, conditions clearly do not exist as of today for large-scale repatriation to be the default or only, let alone forced, solution for the Somali refugees. At the same time, some opportunities for return Somalia exist that could be taken advantage of for voluntary, safe return home which could, moreover, then be supported to make them sustainable. Even more concretely there are refugees who are actually seeking support to return to Somalia.

These are the aspects which UNHCR underlines in explaining the Tripartite Agreement on repatriation to Somalia concluded in November 2013 by the governments of Kenya and Somalia and UNHCR namely, as the agreement says, that returns are strictly voluntary and would not be undertaken until conditions in the country of origin are safe and stable enough to permit sustainable reintegration. The agreement did not set any timetable or deadline for mass return has yet been committed to.

There is no doubt that, under conditions of safety, security and sustainability, voluntary repatriation back to Somalia is fundamentally the most pivotal solution for the Somali refugees in Kenya as indeed elsewhere. Other solutions however have to be brought into the picture as it is clear that there are Somalis for whom return to a country some of them have never even seen will not be feasible. In this connection, the differing clan distributions alluded to earlier are crucial in determining who may be able and willing to return to Somalia when, and to where. In the two decades since the first refugees were displaced, some of the clan territories have shifted and return to the same place that they originated from may not be possible.

The refugees have also had very different types of experiences and expectations of the future than those who have come to the camps more recently. Those who have lived in the camps for prolonged periods are less likely to have property and active social ties to return to. They have become urbanized through camp life to such an extent that it may no longer be reasonable to expect them to contemplate returning to Somalia to adopt rural (pastoral, agro-pastoral or agricultural) livelihoods.

At the same time, most lack the education and skills to be able to find employment in urban areas even if such jobs were to exist – which at the present time they clearly do not. Refugees have expressed a desire for vocational training in the refugee camps in preparation for their onward movement (whether to their country of origin or to other destinations). Those who arrived in 2011 had significantly less education or training than those who had been living in the camps since at least 2006.<sup>27</sup>

#### *a.2. Ethiopia*

Ethiopia has historically managed the security and administration of its refugee camps through its Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA), which is part of the Ministry of Internal Affairs with funding from UNHCR and supported by NGO implementing partners.

Somali refugees in Ethiopia are accommodated in eight camps near the southern town of Dolo Ado across the border from Somalia's Gedo Region and in the area around the regional capital, Jijiga. The camps are poorly connected to communications and trade networks and also have very limited social services and physical infrastructure.

It is estimated that 60% of the 2011-12 arrivals in Dolo Ado were from the Digil-Rahanweyn clan which is looked down on by the other “majority clans”. The host population around the Dolo Ado camps is not from the same clan, although some speak the same dialect of Af-May (the language cluster spoken by most minority groups) as the refugees. Clan differences limit the opportunities for local integration or self-settlement of refugees. However, recently, Ethiopia has been encouraging livelihood activities in the refugee hosting areas. With funding provided by the IKEA Foundation, refugee livelihood activities in areas around the camps are being supported. These activities support both refugees and local hosts to increase their self-reliance.

In 2009, it was estimated that 160,000 refugees were living in Addis Ababa and other Ethiopian towns. These refugees were virtually all unregistered and without assistance (with the exception of some people with serious medical conditions).<sup>28</sup> Despite the lack of available services, many refugees choose to settle in the urban areas if they have family and clan networks that they can call on for support.

Voluntary repatriation to Somalia is recognized as a fundamentally important part of the solutions for Somali refugees in Ethiopia. The Government however underscores that conditions have first to be created and assured inside Somalia which would not only allow refugees to make the decision to return home but also for those returns to be sustainable. Concern is highlighted that if returns are implemented in a precipitous, unprepared, unready manner, the refugees would simply move onwards, although in conditions of potentially multiplied risk and impact other countries in the region and even farther afield. Meanwhile, it is also important that while refugees await the chance to return to safe and dignified lives, they should be given additional opportunities to develop their skills and support themselves as much as possible until such time as more durable solutions may be found. The out of camp policy which was adopted in Ethiopia some four years ago was designed in part to enable this objective.

#### *a.3. Yemen*

Refugee arrivals in Yemen increased dramatically at the end of the last decade: whereas there were between 15,000 and 20,000 arrivals each year from 2005 to 2008, between 2009 and 2012 the annual arrival figure rose from 161,468 to 226,909.<sup>29</sup> Those seeking refuge in Yemen include not only Somali nationals but also other nationalities who use the Somali ports (particularly Bosasso but also

some of the smaller ports) as transit points to cross the Gulf of Aden. The composition of the arrival populations has shifted recently: whereas at the height of conflict and food insecurity (particularly 2006-2009) most of the arrivals were Somali nationals, as the humanitarian situation has improved more Ethiopians have been crossing. In May 2014, 79 percent of the arrivals in Yemen from Somalia were Ethiopian nationals, and the rest were Somali.<sup>30</sup>

The crossing from Somali ports to Yemen is notoriously treacherous. People travel in small, often unseaworthy vessels. They are commonly at the mercy of unscrupulous smugglers who abandon them at sea or push them into the water just off the coast. The Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat reported that between 2010 and 2013 “hundreds of people have been reported drowned or killed by smugglers. Upon arrival, some migrants report being held hostage in Yemen by the smugglers demanding extra payment/ransom. Equally there are reports of coercion, rape, murder, kidnapping, extortion and physical assault”. RMMS reports that reported drowning and killings decreased significantly in 2013 but cases of kidnappings have risen dramatically. It concludes: “There may be a case to argue that the change could be attributed to the rising cases of kidnapping of migrants for ransom, which makes them of more value alive”.<sup>31</sup>

Many of those who make it from Somalia to Yemen have intended to move further into Saudi Arabia but have found themselves stranded at the border. In 2013, 25,000 migrants, many of them Somali, were stranded at the town of Haradh, near the Saudi Arabia border. Since the crackdown on illegal migrants in Saudi Arabia which started in early 2013, over 550,000 people have returned to Yemen (it is not clear how many of these were Somalis). Many Somali refugees who remain in Yemen move into the capital city, Sana’a, to search for work. There, they must compete with other refugees including new arrivals from Syria, as well as with internally displaced Yemenis and poor local residents.

Protection priorities in Yemen concern assisting those who have settled into the cities to find ways of supporting themselves, and also to care for those who are stranded at the border or returned from Saudi Arabia and lack documentation and a means of livelihood support.

#### *a.4. Uganda*

In Uganda, refugees are able to move with a degree of freedom between the camps and urban areas. Omata and Kaplan cite figures of 23,669 Somali refugees living in Uganda – 11,007 in the Nakivale refugee camp and the remaining 12,662 in the capital city, Kampala. Refugees in camps are given access to farmland: some farm it while others rent it out to other refugee farmers. Work done by the Humanitarian Innovation Project at Oxford University shows that Somali refugees tend to work as petty traders, small shop owners and restaurateurs rather than farmers. They found that Somali refugees were relatively well off. Economic activities engaged in within the refugee camps was well integrated with markets in urban areas and even with markets in other countries, and refugees drew on their social networks inside and outside the camps to both develop their businesses and share their profits.

Some observers have suggested that the Ugandan experience may be seen as something of a success story that might be replicated in other countries. Certainly evidence from the Humanitarian Innovation Project suggests that refugee economic activity can be a boon to local economies as well, rather than a burden, and that often with minimal support refugees can generate innovative and sustainable economic activities that minimize their vulnerability as refugees and also prepare them well for whichever durable solution they eventually seek.

Some might argue that Uganda is able to relax restrictions on refugee movement and employment because it has a smaller refugee population than some of its neighbours. Yet it is worth considering whether some aspects of Uganda's approach may be adapted to other host countries in the region to provide livelihood options for particular groups of refugees (see Recommendations on Kenya, below).

#### *a.5. Djibouti*

With functional, logistical and funding support by UNHCR, Djibouti's National Eligibility Commission processes asylum claims. Although the numbers of refugees in Djibouti remains small, the costs of hosting are large for a country with a population of less than one million that has been dealing with the effects of drought for six years. The Holl Holl camp, which had been closed in 2006, was reopened in 2011 to cope with the more than 6000 new arrivals from Somalia, almost double the number the year before and refugees are also settled in the Ali Addeh camp.. Ever since the collapse of the Somali state in 1991, Somalis seeking asylum in Djibouti have been treated as prima facie refugees whether they originated from Somaliland or South/Central Somalia. However, with the end of the repatriation to Somaliland in 2007, only Somalis who originate from South/Central Somalia are now treated as prima facie refugees. Asylum claims from Somaliland would normally be treated individually against the 1951 Convention.<sup>32</sup>

Djibouti is a contributor of troops to the AMISOM force inside Somalia. Al Shabaab claimed responsibility for an attack on a restaurant in May 2014 which it said was in retaliation for Djibouti's involvement in Somalia.

Djibouti is also a major transit point for refugees from the region seeking to travel to Yemen, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States. These '*tahreeps*' or people seeking to migrate from the region, board boats from the areas around Obock. Although the distance across the Red Sea is very short from this point, the seas are treacherous and many lives are lost en route (the crossing across the Red Sea – Obock to Yemen- is by and large deemed less dangerous than the one through the Gulf of Aden – or Bosasso to Yemen).

#### *a.6. Internally displaced persons*

The problems facing refugees and their hosts in the region must be considered together with those of the estimated 1.1 million internally displaced persons inside Somalia.<sup>33</sup> Most IDPs live in inhospitable conditions in urban areas including Mogadishu. Reports of IDPs being the victims of theft, looting, assault and sexual violence – including at the hands of some of the security forces charged with protecting them – are widespread, and providing effective protection and assistance is a huge challenge for the government and aid agencies. Hundreds of thousands more displaced are living in areas outside government control and are thus out of reach of most aid agencies.

In January 2013, the SFG announced a plan to relocate people from the IDP settlements near the city centre to new camps on the outskirts of the city to enable reconstruction of the main business districts. Implementation of the plan has been slowed (but not stopped) due to protests on the part of the displaced (many of whom claim a right to the land being used for the new settlements), landowners in the areas to which IDPs are to be moved, and by human rights groups who warn that security conditions and infrastructure are inadequate to receive people.

Before large-scale refugee return can take place, IDPs must be moved into more sustainable housing if those returning are to avoid becoming displaced in their country of origin or being forced to compete with IDPs for meager resources. But return or resettlement of IDPs is hampered by

continued insecurity in the areas of origin or potential relocation as well as the fact that many people have lost their access to land and/or property and therefore lack the means to support themselves in rural areas. IDPs also know that if they return to their areas of origin they will not be able to access most forms of humanitarian assistance. They thus remain in the displaced centres or settled informally in abandoned buildings or public spaces despite the poor conditions there.

#### **b. Global dimension of Somali displacement: A transnational community**

In many ways, Somali refugees exemplify what the UN High Commissioner for Refugees has termed “Global Refugees”. As noted above, as many as 500,000 Somali refugees live in what might be termed the “far” diaspora<sup>34</sup>, with large concentrations in the United States (the largest communities being in Minneapolis MN Columbus OH, Atlanta GA, and Washington DC), Canada (Toronto and Ottawa being the main centres) and Europe (the UK hosts 100,000-200,000 Somalis, and smaller populations are settled in Italy, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Germany and the Netherlands). There are an estimated 30,000 Somalis living in Dubai and communities in other Gulf countries as well, though many have migrated as students or businesspeople rather than as refugees.

Other African countries with significant Somali refugee populations include South Africa (estimated 30,000 by December 2013) and Egypt (8,000).<sup>35</sup> Many Somali refugees experience considerable hostility from host and other migrant populations in host countries who see them as competing for employment opportunities and whatever social support is available. They derive limited social and economic support from other Somali migrants.

Whether they are refugees, economic migrants or students, Somalis settled in the diaspora provide important resources to refugees living closer to Somalia through their remittance support. Remittances to refugees in the region are estimated at \$1.3 billion to 2 billion a year and are received by approximately 40% of the population living in Somalia. Funds received are spent on essential household expenses such as food, education and healthcare. In a recent study conducted by FAO, one third of remittance recipients reported that they would face food insecurity if remittances were to be suspended. Remittances also reach into the camps. In her 2006 study, Horst estimates that 10% to 15% of refugees in Dadaab received remittances. According to a later study by the United States Bureau for Populations, Refugees and Migration (PRM), more than one-third (37%) said they received remittance support.<sup>36</sup>

The lack of a telecommunications network in the camps in Ethiopia has been cited by refugees as a severe impediment to their livelihoods since they are not able to contact relatives to ask for help, and remittance companies that rely on mobile telephones to complete transactions are not able to work in the camps.<sup>37</sup> In the DRC study, 10% of refugees in Ethiopia reported receiving remittances (most of these are likely to be refugees living closer to Jijiga in the east of the country).<sup>38</sup>

Since 2012, many diaspora Somalis have gone back to Somalia on reconnaissance trips, to check on family members and property, work in the new government or explore the possibilities of investing in the country. Much has been made of these returns as being indicative of a significant change in the security situation in Mogadishu and as evidence that conditions are now ripe for large-scale return. It should however be noted that most of these returns are undertaken by people who have permanent residence or citizenship in another country and usually are relatively successful economically. They have the legal and financial ability to come and go from Somalia (usually Mogadishu) as the security situation dictates. If security deteriorates, they can leave the country immediately. Most would-be returnees from neighbouring countries who lack the legal and financial means to re-emigrate if they find return unsustainable would face a very different situation.

The experience of the wider diaspora shows that engagement with multiple places at the same time, the constant use of social and economic networks across great distances and international borders are important individual and collective survival strategies upon which as many as 40% of the Somali population relies in one way or another.<sup>39</sup> Recognizing the importance of managing risk and improving resilience by actively living in multiple locations, it is likely to be necessary to provide some guarantees for potential returnees to be able to come and go for a time until they are well established and the security situation in the country stabilizes.

#### **IV. Cross-cutting Issues and problematics concerning solutions for Somali refugees**

As noted above, return to Somalia has been hampered by the rapidly changing security environment inside the country as well as by lack of economic opportunities for those returning to the country. Return to Somaliland was relatively “durable” if measured from the perspective of whether or not people re-emigrated, and by the fact that Ethiopia’s refugee camps, including what was once the world’s largest refugee camp, Hartisheik, were eventually closed (although hosting of refugees from southern Somalia continued and was scaled up from 2007 onwards). However many of those who were repatriated to Somaliland continue to live as IDPs, in tents with limited water and food supply, in impoverished conditions.

Resettlement of Somali refugees has been ongoing over the past two decades. Between 1995 and 2010, 55,422 Somali refugees were resettled from the region.<sup>40</sup> The US has been the largest resettlement country for Somali refugees. Others include Austria, Canada, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Resettlement is ongoing from all camps except those in Ethiopia. As of mid-2012, the Danish Refugee Council reported that 16,000 refugees in Kenya were being processed for resettlement. Those given priority tend to be the most oppressed, those with special needs or vulnerabilities, and those who already have close family members living in the resettlement country. However the number of spaces in resettlement programmes is far fewer than the demand for them, and resettlement cannot be considered a viable possibility for most refugees.

Long term settlement within the region – either in camps or in local communities –has become the de facto outcome for many refugees while they wait for a more durable solution. Those who have settled outside the camps have in most cases done better than those who remain inside them; they have established social ties with other refugees and with local communities and many have built viable livelihoods for themselves in the host country. However, host countries are cautious about large-scale local integration. The possibility of approved local integration is thus potentially feasible for only small numbers of refugees for whom return and/or onward resettlement is not practicable. Politically, it is not likely to for host countries to accept the idea of any refugees locally integrating unless other solutions (particularly repatriation and resettlement) are being promoted at the same time for the majority.

#### ***Obstacles to return***

It is clear that a large proportion of refugees intend to return to their homes one day. A study by the Danish Refugee Council in Ethiopia and Kenya in 2012 found that one third of the refugees would, under conditions prevailing at the time, choose to be resettled if they had the option. A third said that they would return to Somalia and smaller numbers said that they would like to settle amongst the local population. If security and economic conditions in Somalia improved, more than half of refugees consulted said that they would opt to repatriate.<sup>41</sup>

The immediate challenge to return is that despite improvements made in governance in the country, Somalia is still at war with al Shabaab and many areas remain unsafe. Moreover in 2014, the danger of a recurrence of famine is real. At the time of writing (July 2014) eight early warning alerts have already been issued calling for increased humanitarian aid to prevent food insecurity from worsening. Repatriating people en masse in the short term while a food emergency is unfolding would have a disastrous effect not only for returnees, but for local residents as well who would have to compete for resources with the new arrivals.

One of the main obstacles to return is the availability of farmland in Somalia. The DRC report says: "A significant difference exists between refugees who arrived before 2006 (40% say that they had access to land [before displacement] and less than half of them believe they would still have access to it) and those who arrived in 2011-12 (80% had access to land, with less than half believing they would still have access to it and an important [unspecified] proportion saying they did not know)".<sup>42</sup>

Given a lack of meaningful durable solutions among those most commonly advocated by UNHCR and host and donor countries, many refugees have been carving out a solution of their own based on creative exploitation of the opportunities presented by having access to transnational social networks. Remittances from relatives living in the "far-off" diaspora - North America, Europe, and the Middle East in particular - provide supplementary income support to those living in refugee camps and in local communities in the Horn. Those who are better off financially often manage to move out into the wider diaspora themselves and become supporters of those living closer to Somalia. This transnational community provides resilience and a risk management function that enables people to survive in communities where employment opportunities are lacking, and for those living further away to contribute to and manage family matters, business activities, and even political engagement even while they live further away. Should large-scale return to Somalia become a reality, the involvement of the diaspora in helping to support returning relatives will be key.

Large-scale return will depend first and foremost on the ability of Somali refugees to return home in safety. This will mean an expansion of areas under government control, particularly into rural areas. It will also mean an expansion of government ability to provide services and protection to returnees coming to urban areas. However, in practice there is likely to be continuing and increased pressure from host countries and donor nations to find solutions to protracted displacement and ultimately for refugees to return to Somalia. Balancing these pressures with international responsibilities to assure protection of refugees and returnees will be a major challenge and there is likely to be an important role for regional actors (IGAD and the African Union in particular) in this regard.

Once large-scale return is feasible, the way in which it is conducted will be crucial to its success. The earlier-mentioned entrenchment of aid within the Somali economy is likely to continue to be problematic, and strong accountability mechanisms will need to be put in place to ensure that the aid gets to the people who need it most. Repatriation will bring needed resources to communities but will also create an opportunity for those who have become adept at manipulating, diverting, and benefiting politically and materially from externally provided assistance. Funneling of large amounts of resources through governance structures will have to be accompanied by financial accountability and the ability to take decisive action in cases of corruption or fraud without which the effectiveness of any return and reintegration operation would be hampered and potentially further insecurity triggered.

## **V. Conclusion**

Displacement within and from Somalia is one of the longest-running crises in the world today. One in six Somalis presently lives outside the country. Host countries in the Greater Horn of Africa are



concerned about the economic, social and political cost of continuing to provide protection and assistance to large numbers of Somali refugees. They are keen to see solutions which will diminish these responsibilities.

Many Somali refugees themselves desire to return to their country either permanently or on a part-time basis depending on their personal circumstances. Given also the different circumstances that have generated refugee flows, the different needs of long-stayers versus newer arrivals, the uncertain fate of the property that many have left behind in Somalia, the precariousness of the current security and economic situation in the country and the size and heterogeneity of the refugee populations, varying solutions will have to be found for different groups of refugees, promoting return for some, integration for others and onward resettlement for still others.

In respect of return to Somalia, decisions about when to initiate or facilitate repatriation, how to balance properly the requirements of return with those of national reconstruction, about meeting the needs of vulnerable IDP and local populations, and how best to promote post-return social integration will be exceedingly complex. Creative solutions will be required across all these questions and about how to enable transnational social networks and mobility to continue to function. Clearly, every opportunity to facilitate return in conditions that are safe, secure, dignified and sustainable should not fail to be realized. At the same time, as long as the reality of violence, conflict and serious abuses of human rights continues critically to characterize the situation in Somalia, pressure to end protracted displacement of its thousands of refugees should be balanced with ensuring that a protection space remains available for those who will continue to need it.

## **Bibliography**

Africa Rights/Human Rights Watch. 1993. 'Seeking Refuge, Finding Terror: the Widespread Rape of Somali Women Refugees in North Eastern Kenya,' Vol. 5, No. 13.

<http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/KENYA93O.PDF>

Al Jazeera, 7 Oct. 2013. 'Calls for Somalis' return grow after siege,'

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2013/10/calls-for-somalis-return-grow-after-siege-2013103125012380775.html>

Ambroso, Guido. 2002. 'Pastoral society and transnational refugees: population movements in Somaliland and eastern Ethiopia 1988-2000.' UNHCR: New Issues in Refugee Research, No. 65.

<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/opendocPDFViewer.html?docid=3d5d0f3a4&query=%22New%20issues%20in%20Refugee%20Research%22>

Campbell, Elizabeth; Crisp, Jeff and Kiragu, Esther, 2011. "Navigating Nairobi; A review of the implementation of UNHCR's urban refugee policy in Kenya's capital city." Geneva: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit.

Centers for Disease Control, Dec. 11 1992. 'Population-Based Mortality Assessment, Baidoa and Afgoi, Somalia 1992.' Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00018099.htm>

Danish Refugee Council. 2013. 'Durable Solutions: Perspectives of Somali Refugees Living in Kenyan and Ethiopian Camps and Selected Communities of Return.'

[http://drc.dk/fileadmin/uploads/pdf/IA\\_PDF/Horn\\_of\\_Africa\\_and\\_Yemen/durable\\_solutions\\_perspectives\\_of\\_somali\\_refugees-2013.pdf](http://drc.dk/fileadmin/uploads/pdf/IA_PDF/Horn_of_Africa_and_Yemen/durable_solutions_perspectives_of_somali_refugees-2013.pdf)

Desert Rose Consulting. 2012. 'Consulting Report: UNHCR, Kobe Camp, Dolo Ado, 2012.' Addis Ababa: Desert Rose (unpublished).

FSNAU. 2013. 'Family Ties: Remittances and Livelihoods Support in Puntland and Somaliland'

[www.fsnau.org](http://www.fsnau.org)

Hammond, Laura and Vaughan-Lee, Hannah. 2012. 'Humanitarian Space in Somalia: A Scarce Commodity,' London: Overseas Development Institute,

<http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/6430-humanitarian-space-somalia-aid-workers-principles>.

Heritage Institute for Policy Studies, 2013. Hasty Repatriation

<http://www.heritageinstitute.org/hasty-repatriation/>.

ICRC. 2012. 'Mogadishu IDP Survey – June 2012.'

[http://gallery.mailchimp.com/8f102acd5706302123896fceb/files/ICRC\\_Mogadishu\\_IDP\\_Survey\\_June\\_2012\\_External\\_Final.pdf](http://gallery.mailchimp.com/8f102acd5706302123896fceb/files/ICRC_Mogadishu_IDP_Survey_June_2012_External_Final.pdf)

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. 2010. *Internal displacement caused by conflict and violence*. Geneva: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. Available at:

[http://www.internal-displacement.org/IDMC\\_IDP-figures\\_2001-2010.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/IDMC_IDP-figures_2001-2010.pdf).

Kirby, John; Kleist, Ted; Frerks, Georg; Flikkema, Wiert and O'Keefe, Phil, 1997. 'UNHCR's Cross-border Operation in Somalia: The Value of Quick Impact Projects for Refugee Resettlement.' *Journal of Refugee Studies* 10(2): 181-198.

Lindley, Anna. 2010. 'Leaving Mogadishu: towards a Sociology of Conflict-Related Mobility,' *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 23(1), 2-22.

Hammond, Laura and Lindley, Anna (forthcoming 2014) 'Histories and Contemporary Challenges of Somali Crisis and Mobility' in A. Lindley, ed. *Crisis and Migration*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Norwegian Refugee Council, 2003. *Profile of Internal Displacement: Somalia*. Norwegian Refugee Council/Global IDP Project. Available at: <http://www.madhibaan.org/in-depth/Somalia+June+2003.pdf>

NutritionWorks. 2013. 'An Independent Review of UNHCR's Response to the Somali Refugee Influx in Dollo Ado Ethiopia, 2011.' Unpublished report. <http://www.unhcr.org/51bec18a9.html>

Refugees International/Mark Yarnell. 11 July 2014. 'Kenyan Government Cracking Down on Somali Refugees,' <http://www.refintl.org/blog/kenyan-government-cracking-down-somali-refugees>.

Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat. Yemen Country Profile. <http://www.regionalmms.org/index.php?id=14>.

Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat. May 2014. Monthly Summary. <http://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/regional-mixed-migration-monthly-summary-may-2014>.

Toole, Mike and Bhatia, Rita. 1992. 'A Case Study of Somali Refugees in Hartisheik A Camp, Eastern Ethiopia: Health and Nutrition Profile, July 1988 – June 1990,' *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 5(3-4), 313-326.

UNHCR Online Statistical Population Database, <http://popstats.unhcr.org/>

UNHCR, *Refugees in the Horn of Africa: Somali Displacement Crisis Information Sharing Portal*, Accessed 10 July 2014. [http://data.unhcr.org/horn-of-africa/regional.php#\\_ga=1.246450564.1403111424.1385324901](http://data.unhcr.org/horn-of-africa/regional.php#_ga=1.246450564.1403111424.1385324901)

UNHCR (2013) *Somalia Factsheet*. May. Nairobi: UNHCR.

UNHCR. 1996. Activities Financed by Voluntary Funds: Report for 1994-95 and Proposed Programmes and Budget for 1996, Part I – Africa, Section 11 – Kenya,' submitted by the High Commissioner to the Executive Committee's 46<sup>th</sup> Session, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/opendocPDFViewer.html?docid=3ae68d760&query=liboi%20refugee%20camp>

UNHCR. 1994. Review of UNHCR's Cross Mandate Operation, EVAL/CROS/14. Dec. 1994. Geneva: UNHCR. <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/search?page=search&docid=3bd4228b4&query=1992%20kenya>

UNHCR. 1992. Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. <http://www.unhcr.org/3ae68c860.html>

Van Hear, Nicholas. 2003. 'From durable solutions to transnational relations: home and exile among refugee diasporas,' UNHCR: New Issues in Refugee Research, No. 83.  
<http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4ff3f01e2.pdf>

York University, 2013. Borderless Higher Education (webpage) <http://crs.yorku.ca/bher-dadaab-about>

## Timeline of Events related to Somali Displacement in the Region

1977-78	Border war between Somalia and Ethiopia sent approximately 650,000 refugees (Ethiopian Somalis) to Somalia
May 1988	Beginning of fighting between Somali National Movement (SNM) and Government of Somalia. Bombardment of Hargeisa and beginning of displacement of people to Somalia
1988-91	Influx of refugees from Somaliland to Ethiopia and Djibouti
Jan 1991	President Siad Barre ousted from power
1991-94	Self-organized repatriation of refugees from Ethiopia to Somaliland
1991-92	Escalation of displacement from South/Central Somalia to Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti
Dec 1992	US-backed Operation Restore Hope launched in Somalia
1991-92	Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps established in Kenya
1992	Refugee boat crossings to Yemen begin to escalate (jump from 30,000 to 60,000 in one year); UNHCR opens assistance operation in Yemen for Somali refugees
1992-94	Cross-Border Operation for return of Somali refugees from Kenya to South/Central Somalia
Mar 1993	Emergency conditions in refugee camps in Kenya stabilized
May 1993	UNOSOM took control of operations from US-led UNITAF
1997	Repatriation from Ethiopia and Djibouti to Somaliland and Puntland launched (bulk of operation continues until 2000, small numbers returned until 2005)
Dec 2006	Ethiopia invades Somalia, ousts Islamic Courts Union
Jan 2007	African Union Mission for Somalia (AMISOM) led by Uganda established
2008	Dolo Ado camps in Ethiopia established
Jan 2009	Ethiopia withdraws from Somalia, hands control to AMISOM/TFG forces
Jan 2011	Distress migration out of Somalia to all countries in the region begins to rise
July 2011	Famine is declared in 2 regions of Southern Somalia (Bakool, Lower Shabelle)
Aug 2011	Famine is declared in a further 3 areas of Southern Somalia (Afgoye, Middle Shabeele, IDP camps in Mogadishu)
Feb 2012	UN declares famine over, 260,000 people are said to have died; 800,000 sought refuge outside the country during the crisis
Sept 2012	Transitional Federal Government cedes power to new government, with Hassan Sheikh Mohamud as President

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Reader, Department of Development Studies, SOAS, University of London, United Kingdom. The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not reflect any official position of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees or the High Level Panel on Somali Refugees. Any errors are the responsibility of the author.

<sup>2</sup> For a full listing of the members of the High Level Panel and its recommendations, see: <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/527b8f7d6.html>

---

<sup>3</sup> Sources: a) *Internal displacement estimates: 1990-2000 from Norwegian Refugee Council, 2003: 27, 40; 2001-2004 from Internal Displacement Monitoring Unit, 2010; 2005-2012 from UNHCR Statistical Online Population Database, 7 Oct 2013, and UNHCR, 2013. Where range given, mid-point used. Data missing for 1991 and 1993.* b) *Figures for refugees living in neighbouring countries (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Yemen) taken from UNHCR Statistical Online Database, 1 February and 7 October 2013, and UNHCR, 2013.*

<sup>4</sup> According to UNHCR's Online Statistical Population Database, Ethiopia hosted 513,950 and Kenya hosted 285,619 Somali refugees in 1992.

<sup>5</sup> Ambroso. 2002.

<sup>6</sup> Ambroso 2002, 17.

<sup>7</sup> Ambroso 2002.

<sup>8</sup> Toole and Bhatia, 1992.

<sup>9</sup> Ambroso 2002, 16.

<sup>10</sup> UNHCR. 1992.

<sup>11</sup> Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Feb. 1991. 'The Horn of Africa: Somalis in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya,' <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6a80f30.html>.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Centers for Disease Control. 1992.

<sup>14</sup> Africa Rights/Human Rights Watch. 1993.

<sup>15</sup> UNHCR 1996.

<sup>16</sup> UNHCR 1994.

<sup>17</sup> Hammond and Vaughan-Lee. 2012.

<sup>18</sup> The actual number of returnees was much smaller than those who received repatriation packages, a reflection of the large numbers of local residents who had registered as refugees, people who had multiple ration cards, and those who chose to return to Somaliland on their own. Ambroso notes that the numbers of people on UNHCR-provided transport from Ethiopia was in some cases only 40% of the number of repatriation packages given (2002).

<sup>19</sup> The author is grateful to UNHCR Djibouti for this information.

<sup>20</sup> A programme to rehouse several hundred displaced families into permanent housing in Hargeisa was launched in 2014, with funding from UNHCR, UN-HABITAT and IOM.

<sup>21</sup> Lindley, 2010.

<sup>22</sup> ICRC. 2012.

<sup>23</sup> NutritionWorks 2013.

<sup>24</sup> DRC 2013, 30.

<sup>25</sup> York University 2013.

<sup>26</sup> Heritage Institute for Policy Studies, 2013.

<sup>27</sup> DRC 2013, p. 8-9.

<sup>28</sup> DRC 2013, citing Campbell et. al. 2011, p. 7.

<sup>29</sup> UNHCR Population Statistics Database.

<sup>30</sup> Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat, May 2014, citing UNHCR statistics.

<sup>31</sup> RMMS. 2013.

<sup>32</sup> The author is grateful to UNHCR Djibouti for this information.

<sup>33</sup> UNHCR Population Statistical Database.

<sup>34</sup> For a discussion of 'near' and 'far' diasporas see N. Van Hear. 2003.

<sup>35</sup> All sources: UNHCR Country Offices, figures expected as of Dec. 2013.

<sup>36</sup> DRC 2013, 32.

<sup>37</sup> Desert Rose Consulting. 2012.

<sup>38</sup> DRC 2013, 33.

<sup>39</sup> FSNAU. 2013.

<sup>40</sup> DRC 2013, 26, citing UNHCR figures.

<sup>41</sup> DRC. 2013. p. 8.

<sup>42</sup> DRC. 2013 p. 8.