



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

Country Operations Plan 2008

Somalia

2008-2009 Country Operations Plan – UNHCR Somalia

Part One: Context and Strategy

A.1. Operational Context

The year 2006 faced two consecutive power shifts in Somalia caused by the erosion of the authority of Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG), which relocated to Somalia in June 2005 from exile in Kenya. The TFG, together with the President, were originally not able to relocate to Mogadishu and instead, in March 2006, the first session of the Parliament inside Somalia was convened in Baidoa, thus effectively creating another seat of the Transitional Federal Institutions. Preoccupied with internal struggle, the TFG did not succeed to build its authority on the ground—required to bring peace, stability and good governance to the country, which in turn has left the key issues relating to security, deployment of international peace keepers, and national reconciliation unresolved. The situation created a conducive environment for the emergence of strong Islamist movement, the "Islamic Courts Union" (ICU) that after a series of fighting with a warlord coalition over a period of three months, eventually took firm control of Mogadishu in June 2006 as well as other regions in South & Central Somalia, stretching all the way up to the internal border of Mudug region in Puntland. The TFG became increasingly isolated, effectively controlling only their seat in Baidoa. Amidst allegations of military support being provided to both parties by regional powers, the international community tried to salvage the fragile peace in the country and facilitated negotiations between the TFG and ICU in Khartoum. However, the talks were interrupted by a major direct confrontation between the TFG supported by the Ethiopian army who effectively invaded Somalia, and the ICU at the very end of the year. The confrontation was unexpectedly swift and it brought the TFG back to power and for the first time since its establishment in 2004, also installed the TFG and the President in Mogadishu. In February 2007, the Ethiopian troops were starting to retreat from Somalia amidst fears of creating power vacuum that urgently needed to be filled by foreign peace keepers. The African Union, supported by the international community, was to deploy a force of some 8,000 peace keepers AMISOM (some 300 Ugandans arrived in March), who would be deployed to Somalia as soon as at all possible to allow for a peaceful establishment of the transitional federal institutions and to prevent the return of warlords and eventual rise of extreme Islamic insurgency.

The humanitarian situation in the country, mainly in South and Central Somalia that has been the theatre of the dramatic developments described above, remained dire and if possible even deteriorated, especially as the humanitarian access of the international community to those most in need of humanitarian assistance in the South remained severely limited for most of 2006 and the beginning of 2007. The extreme conditions experienced due to the drought, which began at the end of 2005, were further compounded by the TFG-ICU fighting that displaced many people, followed by the worst floods in decades that caused further displacement of some 450,000 people and led to massive loss of livelihoods. In all, some 34,000 people crossed border to Kenya in 2006, with no intention to return back to Somalia, and in the months of August and September they were joined by a considerable number of people leaving also for Yemen, Ethiopia, Uganda and Sudan. When the fighting between the ICU and TFG flared up again at the end of the year, more would-be-refugees attempted to cross the Kenyan border, only to be stopped by the Kenyan authorities allegedly for security reasons in order to prevent the infiltration of former ICU forces in the refugee camps in Dadaab and elsewhere in the country. Despite UNHCR and EU demarches with the Kenyan government, the border remained closed as of March 2007 and thousands of civilians were trapped in the Juba regions along the Kenyan border in dire humanitarian conditions, with the international community unable to reach them as the area

continued to be under open conflict between the Ethiopians supported by the U.S. forces, and the remnants of ICU.

The environment in the country for aid operations in 2008 and 2009 is likely to remain varied and complex, with basically three different operational areas with a distinct set of authorities in each of them: the areas of *Somaliland* and *Puntland* experiencing political development, economic recovery and relative stability, and the Central and South Somalia with continued fragile political situation. Developments in 2007 have the potential to significantly shape the course of events in Somalia in 2008 and 2009. However, they will not necessarily determine the course of events: rapid or unexpected changes in the political situation in Somalia may occur during 2007 or the following two years, just as they occurred during 2006.

Nevertheless, three political scenarios can be envisaged for Somalia in 2008-2009:

1. Best case: Prompt and good progress is made on reconciliation between the TFG and other political forces, and on forming an inclusive government with broad domestic support; international political and donor support is strong. Good progress is made on disarmament; security in Mogadishu improves significantly and incidents subside. The deployment of AMISOM force goes smoothly: troop contributions and funding are sufficient for it to be effective; the mission gains broad public approval and does not come under significant attack. The AMISOM mission is later replaced by a small UN Observation Mission, which will ensure compliance by all parties with the political agreements that may have been reached. Good progress is made on drafting a new constitution, preparing for elections, and progress is made in dialogue between the TFG, Puntland and Somaliland on federal arrangements. For UNCT, this would mean a more rapid scaling-up of reconstruction and development work, and more rapid relocation into South-Central Somalia, incl. return to Mogadishu.

2. Most likely case: Progress on reconciliation is slow and limited, and government is only partly inclusive, leading to a limited domestic support while international political and donor support is tempered by political concerns. Progress on disarmament is limited; security in Mogadishu is fragile and incidents persist, with the possibility of short-term escalation. The deployment of AMISOM is slow and is hampered by shortfalls in contributions, funding and logistics; the mission is faced with some public ambivalence and comes under occasional attack. The UNSC would opt for a full fledged “peace-keeping” mission, which will be contingent on the resources to be made available by the contributing countries and will be subject to the same hostile environment as that faced by AMISOM. Progress on drafting a new constitution, preparing for elections is made but is significantly behind schedule. Puntland and Somaliland remain stable though progress in dialogue with the TFG on federal arrangements is limited. The scaling-up of reconstruction and development work and relocation of the UN to South-Central Somalia proceeds but is susceptible to fluctuations in the security environment.

3. Worst case: There is no effective progress in reconciliation, and public support for the TFG does not widen, causing its legitimacy to dwindle; international political and donor support is scaled back or withdrawn. There is no lasting progress on disarmament; insecurity in Mogadishu and South-Central Somalia increase significantly and conflict escalates. The deployment of AMISOM is delayed and/or scaled back; the mission does not gain public confidence and significant attacks occur against it. NO UN mission is deployed to Somalia. No effective progress is made on drafting a new constitution and preparations for elections are postponed. There is no progress in relations between the TFG, Puntland and Somaliland; Somaliland remains stable but Puntland is affected by conflict in the South. The UN is not be able to scale up reconstruction and development work and continues to concentrate its activities in Somaliland and Puntland and

the UN cannot effectively relocate to South-Central Somalia; the humanitarian access remains very restricted, although the humanitarian needs caused by conflict increase.

The UNHCR Country Operations Plan is based on the most likely scenario, i.e. no.2, which will put considerable demands on flexibility and adaptability of the operation. It is also firmly linked with the United Nations Transition Plan (UNTP) for Somalia as a common plan for 2008 to 2009 of all UN agencies in Somalia. The UNTP sets out the strategy of the UN in Somalia for 2008 and 2009 based on the objectives of the Somali Reconstruction and Development Framework (RDF), the five-year national plan for Somalia which was produced by the Joint Needs Assessment for Somalia carried out by the UN, the World Bank and Somali partners in 2005/6. (ref. UNHCR Strategy below)

A.2. Populations of concern and their needs as identified in various assessments

1. Somali Returnees

The main beneficiaries of this programme are Somali refugees who have been returning home since 1992, those who have returned through organized movements as well as those who came back spontaneously. Refugees currently still in exile originate from South and Central Somalia, mainly from the regions of Gedo (Kenya 10,500), Lower Shabelle (Kenya 12,300 and 1,000 Yemen), Middle Shabelle, Lower Juba (Kenya 92,000) and Middle Juba (Kenya 21,000), Banadir (Kenya 12,300, Yemen 21,500) as well as Bay (Kenya 6,000 and 1,000 Yemen) and Bakool (20,500 Yemen). The origin of the refugees matches the pattern of current insecurity and lack of governance.

Historically, the returnees were pastoralists and agro-pastoralists, most of whom return home to little or no livelihood earning opportunities. Many of them select urban centers as their main destination thereby creating strains on the absorptive capacity of towns which are already a pole of attraction for many poor rural families that are adversely impacted by the depressed state of the economy. The general rural-urban migration observed over the past years in Somalia is due to hardships faced by the population in rural areas, coupled with drought and environmental degradation. This attracts returnees to join their clan/kinship in urban areas, where they also have access to various basic services as well as to increased employment opportunities.

Limited absorption capacity of the areas of return has been a major concern for the office, as the authorities in *Somaliland* and in *Puntland* are unable to improve the grossly inadequate state of basic services in the country, which then becomes a serious impediment for the ongoing and future returns. Few Somali returnees earn wages and their survival is mainly based on subsistence farming, occasional jobs, petty trading and begging. Remittances, sent by relatives living abroad, account for up to a billion dollars a year and make up about 23% of the average household income.

According to the UNHCR returnee monitoring, returnees from exile experience no protection problems, but they are chronically vulnerable, food insecure and lack access to basic services (90% without access to clean water, 60% without latrines, 40% without access to health services) and income generation opportunities (67% unemployed), even years after their voluntary repatriation. Of returnee families, who do not send their children to school 64 % say they are unable to pay the school fees, while 20% claim lack of a school in their area.

Infant, child and maternal mortality rates are among the highest in the world and Somalia remains among countries with the highest incidence of tuberculosis in the world. Reproductive health is a major problem in Somalia, with a maternal mortality rate of 1,600 per 100,000 placing Somali

women among the most high-risk groups in the world. After several polio-free years, new cases have been registered in South Somalia in 2006 and also amongst the new arrivals in the refugee camp of Dadaab in Kenya in October. Less than 50% of Somalis live in households with sanitary means of disposing excreta (however 60% of returnees, 76% of IDPs in Bossasso, and 75% of IDPs in Garowe have no such facilities). The impact of poor environmental sanitation is particularly felt in the urban centres where people live in close proximity to each other. 72% of returnees interviewed report that they dispose of their garbage by burning or dumping it close to their dwellings.

With a total enrolment of over 285,000 children, Somalia has some 22 per cent gross enrolment ratio (GER), which places the country at the bottom of the world. While there have been increases in the number of operational schools and in the enrolment rates, considerable disparities in the quality of and access to primary education are still problematic in parts of the country because of the socio-economic, cultural and political realities. Most existing schools are concentrated in and around urban areas and are mainly financed by fees or other forms of support from parents and communities, with some input from external agencies. Only slightly over one third, or 37 per cent, of pupils are girls at the lower primary school levels, and the gender disparity increases rapidly in higher grades due to high drop-out rates of girls caused by a combination of traditional attitudes, timing of classes and economic considerations.

According to the first nationwide HIV/AIDS Sero-prevalence survey, the mean HIV prevalence is 0.9% with zonal variations ranging from 0.9 in Central south, 1% in Puntland to 1.4% in Somaliland. The national HIV prevalence among STD patients is 4.3% and 4.5% for TB patients.

2. Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

Due to the porous border and without any stringent immigration control policy nor the possibility of its realistic application, Somalia has been hosting a large number of foreigners, primarily originating from Ethiopia. Further, the absence of open conflict in *Somaliland* and *Puntland* has provided the parts of the country with relative calm, promoting an increase of economic activity which has attracted economic migrants from the region. Immigrants normally enter *Puntland* illegally via the commercial trade route between *Somaliland* and *Puntland* linking Burao and Bosasso, or from South Somalia or the Somali Region (Zone V) of Ethiopia, as well as from *Somaliland* itself. In fact, since the *Somaliland* Presidential Decree to expel “illegal foreigners”, as security measure following the spate of killings of international humanitarian aid workers in October 2003, there has been a notable deterioration of the protective environment in Somaliland—translating into many foreigners and Somalis from South/Central Somalia having crossed and crossing over to *Puntland*, in search of security and/or certainty of continued stay outside their countries. Also, the 1,660 km of unprotected coastline of *Puntland* has provided a safe haven for human traffickers, who use *Puntland* as a transit area for economic migrants and others from all other parts of Somalia, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Tanzania, Sudan and Asia (Sri Lanka) to gain access to Yemen, the Arab Gulf States and to Europe. In 2006, 11,727 Ethiopians and 14,151 Somalis crossed Gulf of Aden and reached Yemen, while hundreds of them died because of drowning and other incidents on the way.

According to UNHCR’s information, supported by a variety other reliable sources, Bossasso, a major port in *Puntland* has the largest concentration of Ethiopian migrants, followed by Galkayo. The majority of the Ethiopians are Oromos with a few Amharas and of late, also Tigreans—due to the increasing tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Many report continuous harassment by the police and the need to bribe to remain in the country. Consequently, most do not have access to basic services due to financial, language or security constraints. Originating from one of the countries with the highest HIV rate in the region, they are continuously subject to stigmatization

and accused for spreading the deadly disease in Somalia. Thus, the group continues to face social exclusion, discrimination and violence committed without impunity.

3. IDPs

IDPs in Somalia constitute a mixed group of an estimated 400,000 people residing in the main urban centres of the country, who have in common deplorable living conditions and lack of protection from any kind of abuse and none or limited access to basic services. Their life quality indicators are even lower than those of ordinary Somalis and than those described for the returnees.

The group comprises mainly conflict-related displaced person from South/Central Somalia, away from their protective clan base and currently living mainly in Puntland but also in Somaliland where they are considered by many authorities and civilians alike to be unwelcome and “illegal migrants” (after a Presidential Decree of 2003 declaring them illegal migrants in Somaliland). The group also includes those who originate from Puntland but who had lived for 2 or 3 generations in South and Central Somalia where they own property and businesses, and were forced to flee to Puntland to escape the unrest. In the South and Central Somalia, the most recent IDPs are to be found in the Jubas alongside the Kenyan border, incl. in and around Kismayo. However, the major concentration of IDPs is in Mogadishu, where some 250,000 people are scattered over 200 settlements, many of them in public/government buildings (69%).

The second major group are those displaced by natural disasters, such as drought, floods and tsunami, and forced to flee to areas within their region; mostly nomads displaced by severe droughts who have no skills other than those associated with livestock raising. They are often hosted by their tribesmen in urban areas who provide sustenance and protection for them, but if that is not an option, they resort to casual labor and begging.

Returnees, who even after years since their return, find themselves in neighbourhoods of mixed vulnerable populations, at risk and in need of assistance.

B. UNHCR Strategy

B.1. Achievements to date

1. Somali returnees:

The main thrust of the UNHCR programme in Somalia has been to promote the voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees to safe and secure areas of return in Northern Somalia, assist the reintegration of returnees through provision of basic services and livelihood creation, and facilitate the voluntary repatriation and reintegration of refugees wishing to return to South and Central Somalia. UNHCR has been in the past years implementing community-based reintegration projects in Mogadishu, Hiran and Lower Shabelle districts, *Puntland* and *Somaliland*, targeting communities with high concentration of returnees, with mixed populations including also IDPs and host communities. In 2006 alone, a total of 208,440 people, including the latest returnees and their communities, benefited from UNHCR reintegration projects aimed at meeting their most immediate needs while leading towards the recovery and development interventions of other UN agencies and NGOs. Over the past decade, over 498,000 refugees have returned to Somalia with UNHCR assistance, of whom a total of 1,706 Somali refugees returned in 2006. This low number is a reflection of the near-completion of the major return operation to *Somaliland* and the continued insecurities in South/Central Somalia throughout 2006, which affected *Puntland* as well, particularly in the latter part of the year. In South/Central Somalia, UNHCR halted volrep facilitation from February 2006 to the present, and at the same time,

increased Somali outflows to Kenya and Yemen were recorded and confirmed on both sides of the border.

UNHCR reintegration interventions have been tailored to increase the absorption capacity of the communities receiving returnees through the (re)construction of basic infrastructure and increasingly also through livelihood support and job creation that would generate income for returnees so that they can access basic services such as education and health. In *Somaliland*, UNHCR interventions concentrated increasingly on creating income generating opportunities for returnees, including through the support to crop production and irrigation water systems in areas with agricultural potential. Likewise, micro credit and revolving fund schemes have been made available to more beneficiaries, targeting especially female headed households. In *Puntland*, albeit on a much smaller scale than in *Somaliland* due to limited funds so far, UNHCR has been supporting the basic infrastructure in the vital sectors of health and education, but also here shifting towards the income generating activities through the provision of cash grants for start up of small businesses. The reintegration interventions in Mogadishu, Benadir district, and also in Hiran and Merka districts replicated the approach applied in the North, and concentrated on the support to agriculture as a viable source of sustainable income and on support to small income generating ventures such as bread and pastry production and poultry rearing. In all three zones, sanitation projects with a strong component of hygiene awareness were implemented.

Throughout the years, the office has been funding projects and/or joint UN initiatives addressing the prevention of HIV/AIDS amongst returnees.

2. Refugees and asylum-seekers:

In the past years, UNHCR focused on improving the quality of RSD and resettlement services in *Somaliland* and as of 2006, providing first-time RSD opportunities for those seeking protection in *Puntland*. In both areas, this included becoming more involved in the issues related to mixed migration. During 2006, UNHCR's protection leadership brought IOM into the operational picture for the first time, as the aid community came together to respond to the humanitarian needs of the untold numbers of Somali and non-Somali migrants, who transit Somalia to Yemen. Despite the relatively secure environment in *Somaliland*, UNHCR operations were undertaken amidst a number of challenges, including the Government's decision to suspend registration of new Ethiopian asylum seekers, xenophobic tensions against refugees within the context of transiting migrants and South/Central Somali IDPs unvaryingly tagged as "illegal foreigners". Examples of arbitrary arrest of asylum seekers and refugees confirm an overall deterioration in the protection environment for refugees, asylum-seekers in *Somaliland* during 2006. In March 2006, the Refugee Eligibility Committee (REC) within the Ministry of Interior suspended registration of new asylum seekers on the instructions of the President following a surge in asylum applications primarily from Ethiopian Oromos. Following extensive representations by UNHCR, the Minister nominated a new REC in October, but until now registration has still not re-started.

The *Puntland* authorities remained highly concerned with the mixed migration flows through its port city of Bossaso and both in May-June and October-November, the peak times for human trafficking, UNHCR worked with IOM, DRC (Danish Refugee Council) and other agencies both with humanitarian action and assisted-voluntary return for stranded migrants. However, amidst the increasing tensions in South/Central Somalia, the migrants, IDPs and foreigners alike, were then perceived as a threat to national security. In September 2006, *Puntland* authorities passed a Presidential Decree (No. 01/09 of 25 September 2006), prohibiting human smuggling and related activities. The Decree resulted in the immediate arrest and deportation of 1,370 Ethiopian migrants. UNHCR's intervention and the initiation of RSD services in November halted further deportations but *Puntland* authorities reportedly continued with the arrest of illegal migrants and threats of deportation.

This Bosasso situation has been proposed as a pilot for testing the “10 Points Action Plan to Address Complex Migration” developed by UNHCR, for which all necessary resources should be in place.

With support from UNHCR, a Refugee Affairs Committee (RAC) was established in November, focusing on asylum seeker registration, referral to UNHCR RSD services and refugee protection responsibilities. Due to the limited capacity of the government, maintaining its stable non-discriminatory participation will require constant engagement, monitoring and capacity building. UNHCR has also increased protection monitoring in Bossasso, visiting detainees, checkpoints and IDP sites on a daily basis. However, these basic protection activities through an integrated and cooperative approach with the international community are yet to be translated in any substantial, durable manner of assistance to those in need of international protection.

3. IDPs

A dedicated Somalia IDP programme started in 2006 with a supplementary budget of USD 4.7 million which became gradually funded during the year. It was conceived with focus on protection closely linked to community mobilisation/services, and emergency shelter/NFIs as well as support to basic services infrastructure. The response to emergency shelter needs have been closely linked and integrated with the long-term approach to durable solutions through local integration/relocation, and thus permanent shelter solutions. The Somalia cluster is therefore called “shelter” and not “emergency shelter “ cluster.

The entire concept, planning and implementation of all interventions have been developed within the cluster approach in the humanitarian response capacity and the framework of the Somalia Interagency Standing Committee (IASC), with UNHCR having assumed the leadership of Protection and Shelter Clusters. The project has been closely linked with the Somalia regular projects for the return and reintegration of Somali refugees described above, since these two beneficiary groups often reside in the same settlements and face the same dire living conditions. The corner stone of this project is the Somalia IDP Strategy adopted by the UNCT in 2005.

All achievements under this project are the result of UNHCR’s participation in joint collaboration with other agencies under the Somalia IASC:

- Population movement tracking: As part of humanitarian coordination mechanism, in order to capture any new population displacement and to allow the humanitarian community to plan for eventual assistance provision, a network of national NGO partners who regularly track population movements has been established by UNHCR under the administration of the Danish Refugee Council and the Somalia NGO Consortium (later shifted to the Norwegian Refugee Council). The information is also being shared with the UNHCR offices within the region, including with detailed maps where all the information required for planning and response is contained.
- Protection Monitoring Network: In Somalia, where violations of human rights are endemic and deeply ingrained in the society, the international community has so far been lacking records of concrete and specific violations that would allow us to address these issues with the authorities. A network of national partners who report human rights violations has therefore been established to gather such information and to plan interventions accordingly. Information thus collected will inform adequate interventions to redress violations and to prevent them in future.
- IPP Profiling: Somalia has been chosen as one of the first countries to test the draft Guidelines on How to Profile IDPs, recently produced by the IASC. Therefore, under the UNHCR Protection Cluster leadership, the first step was a full Desk Review (June-

- August 2006) of existing data (1) to take stock of information already available, (2) to review the gaps that need particular attention and (3) plan a separate profiling exercise on those areas. At the end of the phase one, the main identified gaps were analyzed and joint recommendations on priority IDP locations to be profiled in the next immediate phase were agreed upon. Subsequently, IDP profiling pilot initiatives were initiated in October 2006 in the priority geographical areas where the information gaps had been identified, i.e. South and Central Somalia with special focus on Mogadishu, where there are estimated 250,000 IDPs living in up to 200 different settlements. For the rest of the country, the desk review has gathered information sufficient to plan for interventions in selected priority geographical areas and sectors under this project.
- **Community Based Protection:** UNHCR Somalia has developed a framework for community/social mobilization in the IDP settlements throughout Somalia. The framework consolidates the community services work previously done to inject protection and human rights approaches where necessary, fostering the concept of “community-based protection”, and to expand the community service work into new areas, particularly in the South & Central Somalia. UNHCR was also actively involved in the development of criteria and methodologies for the selection of beneficiaries of the various IDP relocation initiatives (i.e. Bossasso IDP pilot project), with participation of all concerned, including the communities themselves. The principles of ADGM were utilised throughout and the needs identified through the direct consultations with the beneficiaries formed the bases of the criteria. In all interventions, focus was placed on women as the main resource of the Somali society, as well as on children and adolescents.
 - **Emergency shelter:** UNHCR as part of the shelter cluster concentrated on emergency shelter and provision of NFIs as well as support to basic services infrastructure and mid-term shelter solutions, incl the development of a mobile shelter prototype. 27,000 plastic sheets, 5,200 mosquito nets and 16,450 sleeping mats were dispatched for distribution for IDPs in Somaliland and Puntland. Moreover, seven projects were implemented in the areas of community services, education and vocational training, sanitation and legal protection facilitating the access of IDPs to basic services. A Psychological/Rehabilitation facility has been established for SGVB victims and rehabilitation of disabled persons.
 - Substantial efforts were put to support awareness raising and training of all relevant constituencies on the rights of IDPs, in particular, the national, local and traditional authorities, warlords, militias, land owners, the affected populations, the donor community, etc.

B.2. Protection and Solutions Strategy for 2008-09

- 1. Somali returnees: Attain durable solutions through voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees from Djibouti, Kenya, Yemen and elsewhere and ensure their effective reintegration upon return. (link to Global Strategic Objective 3.1., 3.2., 3.3., 3.4, 3.5.,5.1, 5.2, 5.5)

About 6,000 refugees still remained in Djibouti refugee camps by the end of 2006, despite strenuous efforts by UNHCR to close the repatriation operation. Large-scale voluntary repatriation was formally completed on 30 June 2006, but the final group of about 6,000 refugees is expected to return to *Somaliland* in 2007, following the December 2006 re-registration/verification exercises in Djibouti. The completion of organized repatriation movements in 2007 will allow UNHCR in *Somaliland* to focus all its efforts on further strengthening reintegration partnerships to prepare for the eventual phase-down of the programme, while at the same time addressing the most obvious gaps, both geographical and sectoral, in the previously undertaken interventions, all the while ensuring close linkages to the IDP programme.

Thus, infrastructure interventions will be limited to spot interventions in selected locations addressing the needs of particular communities of concern to UNHCR, especially the mixed communities in desperate living conditions in urban settlements. Efforts will be directed at creating livelihoods and to eventually attract vulnerable population from overcrowded urban centres back to their original rural areas. All rural interventions will take account of the extremely degraded environment, which can no longer sustain the traditional pastoralist livelihoods due to extensive charcoal burning and deforestation, overgrazing and the effects of perpetual drought and other natural disasters.

Voluntary repatriation to Puntland is expected to increase in 2007 and further pick up in 2008-09, depending on the peace and security in the region and on socio-economic pull factors for refugees now mainly in Yemen and Kenya. As most refugees who may eventually return to Puntland used to live in the South of Somalia before displacement, they will carefully evaluate their options as to where to return, Puntland being the last place of residence and the South being their area of clan origin.

While eventual large scale voluntary repatriation to South and Central Somalia will be subject to the establishment of a Supplementary Programme based on the Regional Voluntary Repatriation Plan developed by the office in 2006, UNHCR activities in these areas in 2008-09 will be geared towards preparing for this scenario - within the increased financial and human resource allocation proposed under the regular programme and in synergy with the supplementary programme for IDPs, taking in to account at least partial re-establishment of UNHCR international presence in Mogadishu, Kismayo and at least one additional field location strategically positioned close to the border with Kenya. Humanitarian access permitting and depending on the spread of eventual returnee movements, UNHCR will be able to cover even more locations through roving or temporary deployment of its international staff based in Nairobi and/or in Puntland.

As in the North, absorption capacity of the potential returnee areas together with income generating initiatives and livelihood creation will be the essential approach to make returns and reintegration in the South attractive and sustainable. The programme will strive to encourage joint action with other UN agencies and partners to ensure linkages with their early recovery and development interventions, and thus prepare ground for eventual exit strategy from day one of our re-engagement in the South.

- **2. Refugees and asylum-seekers: Provide international protection and life-sustaining assistance to refugees, where UNHCR has access, while pursuing durable solutions for them. (link to GSO 1.1., 1.2., 1.3, 2.1., 2.2.,2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 5.4)**

It is assumed that UNHCR programme for refugees and asylum-seekers in both *Somaliland* and *Puntland* will have to grow in volume in 2008-09 due to the increased number of beneficiaries. The main challenges will remain the extremely weak institutional capacity of all governmental counterparts in the country, even in the relatively developed *Somaliland*, the lack of protective environment for refugees and asylum-seekers created by the various hostile pieces of legislation (Presidential decrees both in *Somaliland* and *Puntland*) and the extremely xenophobic attitude of general public towards non-Somalis in general. Resettlement being the only real durable solution for those recognised as refugees, cases to be considered by potential resettlement countries will be either submitted on dossier basis or screened in Somalia by those governments who place less restrictions on travel of their staff. The resettlement possibilities of recognised refugees will be enhanced through UNHCR organised English language training.

In this connection, the migratory flows from Bossasso to Yemen are planned to be addressed by the ten-point plan of action for Addressing Mixed Migratory Movements in which UNHCR Somalia intends to participate on pilot basis in 2007 provided that all required resources will be made available to the office. The office will strive to establish and/or expand partnership with international NGOs with protection capacity to pre-screen potential asylum-seekers. In *Somaliland*, possibilities for local integration through employment and vocational training will be further explored and if feasible, implemented. Meanwhile, through the enhanced presence in Mogadishu, UNHCR will initiate cooperation with the TFG on the establishment of RSD procedure and on the refugee legislation.

- **3. IDPs: Improve the protection situation of IDPs and their current living conditions, while promoting and fostering durable solutions for them, as well as for returnees and other vulnerable populations living in the same settlements. (link to GSO 1.4, 1.5, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 4.1, 4.2, 5.3, 4.3., 5.1., 5.2., 5.3.)**

The supplementary programme for IDPs will benefit substantially from the resources under the regular UNHCR programme, especially in Puntland and in the South, where the office is planning to expand its presence, security and humanitarian access permitting. The IDP programme in 2008-09, while increased by less than 20 per cent compared with 2007, will thus be able to reach more beneficiaries, mainly through the enhanced presence in Mogadishu and in the South and better tailor its interventions, with reduced costs for cross border coordination/travel between Nairobi and the field.

The three primary protection concerns identified in IDP settlements across the country are gender-based violence (particularly rape, domestic violence and sexual assault), access to justice and personal security. Particular problems are faced by IDPs from South/Central Somalia in *Somaliland* and newly also in *Puntland*, for whom the protection environment is extremely weak owing to the ambivalence of the governments regarding their status. The *Somaliland* government formally requested UNHCR's technical assistance in identifying an appropriate legal status for this group, given their assertion of independence and the quest for recognition. During 2006, the perceived ICU expansion to the North-East significantly reduced the *Puntland* authorities' good will to accept any and all ethnic Somalis, as its Constitution would mandate. With this narrowed protective environment, any foreigner, including non-*Puntlanders* (Darood clan), are at greater risk of arbitrary arrest and detention, as well as *refoulement* to South/Central Somalia.

As for IDPs within South/Central Somalia, the protection gap was and will continue to be affected by international access. UNHCR and the Protection Cluster has been creative in establishing alternative methodologies to engage local partners in monitoring and reporting on forced displacements and protection issues (ref. p.7 under achievements), and those will be modified and/or enhanced depending on the international presence in the region.

The shelter interventions will likely be concentrated in Mogadishu, where UNHCR will be the lead agency in providing assistance and designing durable solutions for IDPs who will have to relocate from public buildings in Mogadishu that will be taken in use by the TFIs in 2007 and beyond. Although the number of affected people is at present not known, the estimate is up to 100,000 in 2007, depending on the number of public buildings/compounds that will be repossessed by the ministries that will be relocated from Baidoa (the former interim seat of the TFG) to Mogadishu. Once Kismayo and the Juba regions will be accessible, a large number of IDPs will need to be assisted with return to their original areas, including with emergency and temporary shelter materials/units. Most likely, the returns of Somali refugees from Kenya and elsewhere will be taking place concurrently with movements of IDPs, both groups potentially competing for the same meagre resources and access to land, especially in the fertile riverine

regions. Strong focus on the land issues, in cooperation with the TFG and under the leadership of UN Habitat will be crucial in this regard, as the success of the return operation and the achievement of truly durable solutions will depend on the land issue settlement in the South. UNHCR will need to also be prepared to face the recent displacement caused by the instability and violence in Mogadishu.

Also in 2008 and 2009, it is likely that Somalia will be significantly affected by environmental factors, as it has been in the recent past, causing either drought or flooding, and that these will cause short-term humanitarian crises in parts of the country such as the Juba and Shabelle valleys, where UNHCR will be called upon to provide assistance in form of NFIs and/or population movement tracking, etc.

Planning Figures ¹				
Population	Dec. 2006	Dec. 2007	Dec. 2008	Dec. 2009
Refugees	669	5,568	6,222	9,532
Asylum seekers	1,221	2,431	1,706	1,094
Returnees During the Year	1,706	7,000	1,000	3,000
Returnees – beneficiaries of UNHCR Projects	208,440	200,000	100,000	100,000
IDPs	140,000	260,000	400,000	400,000
Total	351,554	472,945	508,055	513,626

Partnership and Collaboration

On 24 April 2006, IASC endorsed Somalia as an additional country for the cluster approach roll-out aimed at the provision of relief and assistance to IDPs. UNHCR will continue to lead the protection cluster together with OCHA, and also perform the lead role under the emergency shelter together with UNHABITAT.

Through all its interventions, both under the regular and supplementary programme, UNHCR will actively participate in the joint UN effort to support stabilization in Somalia through strengthened Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs) and urgent provision of services to the population, that will aid the consolidation of the situation in the country and the restoration of credibility of the TFG amongst the Somali people, paving the way towards a new constitution and general elections in 2009.

For this purpose, the UN has designed plan a Transition Plan (UNTP) that is focused on supporting a transition in Somalia from conflict to peace, and from crisis to recovery and longer-term development. The plan covers a period of 2008 and 2009 and it builds on the United Nations Action Plan for 6 months in 2007 and will provide a basis for longer-term UN development planning for Somalia after 2009 under the Reconstruction and Development Framework, once the transition to peace and recovery is complete. The plan is distinct from the annual humanitarian-focused United Nations Consolidated Appeal for Somalia.

The UNTP is structured around five overall strategic outcomes which are intended to contribute to the realisation of the ‘pillars’ of the RDF. The outcomes are:

¹ These planning figures should summarize Annex 3 of the 2007 COP/ROP.

- Key federal and state institutions functioning with accountability and inclusion
- District / regional government established for reconciliation and expansion of pro-poor service delivery
- Overall security ensured; people have improved access to justice and confidence in law enforcement institutions
- Primary education and health services expanded with tangible benefits for children and vulnerable groups, and strategies developed for secondary and tertiary institutions
- Sustainable livelihoods, food security and natural resource management improved.

The following cross-cutting issues will be incorporated into the efforts towards the above strategic outcomes (all in line with UNHCR own priorities):

- human rights protection and promotion;
- gender equality;
- HIV/AIDS prevention.

As the Somali national NGOs are the backbone of both the regular and the IDP programme, building their capacity together with that of the authorities will continue to form a crucial part of the UNHCR programmes. As concerns the international partners, it is hoped that more reputable international NGOs will expand their presence in the South in tact with the improved access, and join the Danish Refugee Council and the Norwegian Refugee Council in establishing their presence in Mogadishu.

Assumptions and Constraints

a. Flexibility of the UNHCR programmes: The UNHCR Somalia Operations Plan has been prepared with the expectation that the political situation in Somalia in 2008 and 2009 may broadly resemble the ‘most likely’ scenario outlined above (p.2.), perhaps being slightly better or slightly worse. However this expectation is accompanied by an awareness that the political, humanitarian and economic situation in Somalia in 2008 and 2009 may prove to be significantly different from this scenario and possibly even differ from either the best or worse cases as outlined above. Some flexibility is therefore implicit in the COP, though within limits, the substantive content of all three programmes (CM, RP, IDP) can be adjusted according to circumstances. However, UNHCR is aware that it can be called upon by the Humanitarian Coordinator and the Somalia IASC to respond to major unexpected developments (under the cluster responsibilities). The COP links closely to the development needs and plans outlined in the UNTP/RDF, and it should therefore remain largely valid as long as those overall UN plans are valid.

b. Humanitarian access and relocation to Mogadishu: Despite the UN’s best efforts to expand its presence, two consecutive power shifts and fighting in many parts of the South and Central Somalia at different times of the year 2006 significantly limited the humanitarian access to those most in need. The assumption for 2008-09 is that there may be pockets of insecurity remaining in the southern part of the country, in all though, the access will improve and for the most, the UN will be able to operate in Mogadishu, Lower/Middle Shabelle, Hiran, Bay/Bakol, and Lower/Middle Jubas, incl. to deploy international staff at least on mission basis. For *Puntland* and *Somaliland*, it is assumed that the security situation/humanitarian access will remain as now, if not improve, which has recently resulted in the reclassification of the security phase III for the whole of both areas.

Since the mid-1990s, the location of the country offices of the UN agencies and the majority of other humanitarian and development agencies operating in Somalia, has been in Nairobi, which

has constituted a significant operational challenge. UNHCR has been one of the agencies who have tried to devolve programme management to offices inside Somalia where possible, incl. through the establishment of the Sub-office in *Somaliland* and through the deployment of international staff both to SO Hargeisa and Field Office Garowe in *Puntland*. The COP intends to further strengthen the decentralization through the upgrading of Garowe to sub-office, in charge of two field units in Galkayo and Bossasso.

In 2008-09, it is envisaged that the UN system will accelerate the re-deployment of personnel to Somalia, and it is hoped that this will culminate in the re-establishment of agencies' country offices in Mogadishu. The COP makes provision for a move of the operational international staff, incl. the post of the Deputy Representative under the IDP programme from BO Nairobi to Mogadishu, as well as for roving functions of other posts in Nairobi and Puntland (ref. Management Strategy p.14).

c. Limited absorption capacity of the areas of return: The issue of grossly inadequate state of basic services in the country has been a serious impediment for past and future returns, frequently used by the authorities in *Somaliland* and increasingly also in *Puntland* as a condition for accepting new returnee arrivals in the country. The reintegration programmes of UNHCR have thus always included a strong component of basic services and (re)construction of basic infrastructure. This has been caused by the lack of capacity of development agencies on the ground and their lack of comprehensive approach. It is assumed that the current focus on joint programming in urban centres (Bossasso, Galkayo, Hargeisa) will improve the basic services in the mixed settlements there and attract more donor funding for expansion of this comprehensive approach also in other locations, particularly in the North. In the South, on the hope that it will be reopened for a larger scale engagement of the UN, UNHCR plans to focus on the primary returnee areas in the Jubas and Shabelles, incl. Mogadishu, wherever possible working through joint interventions with others. After over a decade of fighting and humanitarian calamities, the needs of the potential returnee areas will, however, be enormous and hardly any interventions will be sufficient until the Somalia RDF is eventually funded and implemented.

d. Increased number of Ethiopian arrivals and mixed migration flows: The mixed migration issue coupled with an increase in the numbers of Ethiopians arriving in Somalia, is likely to place a substantial strain on the resources under the Care & Maintenance programmes in *Somaliland* and *Puntland* and the available protection staff in the operation. While the COP assumes an increase in the number of staff dealing with the RSD, introduction of pre-screening mechanism is hoped to reduce the volume of asylum applications and thus to save resources. Again, Bosasso is proposed to be a pilot for the 10 Points Action Plan for Complex Migrations.

Potential for Durable Solutions and Phase Out

As the remaining return from Djibouti would have been completed in 2007, UNHCR's support to reintegration programme in *Somaliland* will be consolidated in 2007 and 2008 and the office will continue with the shift of focus towards *Puntland* and the South. UNHCR's phase-down strategy in reintegration will be linked to the action-oriented commitment of others to meet the needs of vulnerable communities in a comprehensive way, in line with the end of 2006 discussions of the UNCT with Somaliland authorities to shift the focus of the UN towards early recovery and development. Accordingly, an exit from reintegration activities in *Somaliland* is envisaged for some time during 2008, remaining with only a limited budget in 2009. The transition of the UNHCR presence in Hargeisa towards protection of asylum-seekers and refugees, including

capacity building for the authorities, as well as shifting the capacity towards discharging the new responsibilities for the IDPs, especially protection and community services, would have been finalised by then.

Although the situation in the South will to a large extent influence the scale of repatriation movements to *Puntland* (as those in Kenya originate mainly from there but had lived in Puntland before their flight) the office plans to employ the same strategy as outlined for *Somaliland*, i.e. once the returnee operation is concluded, there will be a shift towards protection of refugees and asylum-seekers. However, the timing will depend on resources available to effect return movements and to step up the reintegration programme for those who wish to return to *Puntland* in 2008-09. Also in this operational zone, the capacity of the office to perform the new responsibilities for IDPs under the cluster approach will be strengthened.

With no certainty of the time it will take to restore peace in Southern and Central Somalia, there is no time frame for an exit-strategy concerning repatriation and reintegration. First, the large scale return of refugees has to be enabled by conducive security, safety and governance conditions. UNHCR, will by then have re-established its Representation in Mogadishu, at least partially already in 2008, also beginning to engage in the international protection of asylum-seekers and refugees.

As concerns asylum-seekers and refugees, UNHCR should continue the capacity building of the authorities in *Somaliland* and *Puntland* and of the Transitional Federal Government, and to promote refugee law and respect for refugees' rights. An exit-strategy is therefore not appropriate at this time. Rather, increased involvement, where possible, is required for UNHCR to perform its mandate in the long run.

Summary Management Strategy for UNHCR

1. Developing dynamic partnerships: As described above, UNHCR Somalia has substantially enhanced its partnership and collaboration with all stakeholders in the country, and together with the UNCT has come a long way towards joint programming, while establishing itself firmly as co-lead of the Protection and Shelter Clusters under the Somalia IASC. Both clusters are amongst the most active ones and they are responsible for crucial tasks under the overall UN strategy to stabilise the situation in the country and to support the TFG. Under the Shelter Cluster work, UNHCR has improved its emergency preparedness and response capacity, which is also planned to be maintained under this COP.

2. Guaranteeing the AGDM perspective in the operation: AGDM has been introduced in all participatory assessments undertaken under the regular programmes (CM and RP) as well as in all new protection initiatives under the IDP programme. This has been reflected in the introduction of community services positions into the operation during 2006-07 and further strengthening of the sector and its links with all protection work as means of providing information for the programme in this submission.

3. Strengthening external relations: The office has been relatively successful in fundraising for the supplementary programme for IDPs, through creating awareness amongst the Nairobi-based donors, which is set to be enhanced in 2008-09. UNHCR Somalia will continue to provide regular contributions to various updates and information channels of the UNCT as well as to dedicated UNHCR channels of communication. A UNV officer under the IDP programme will be principally charged with that responsibility.

4. Optimising security arrangements: UNHCR participates and fully depends on the joint UN security system in the country, contributing to all security related costs (security communications

costs, security training for staff, security officers on the ground in the South & Central, complete MOSS and enhanced MOSS compliance at the common premises in Somalia). Given the higher number of staff in 2008-09, the UNHCR share of security costs will increase proportionately. Considerable additional costs are anticipated with the preparations for partial or complete relocation of the UN country offices to Mogadishu, for which some initial work in terms of e-MOSS compliance has already been done in 2007 (i.e. improvement and e-MOSS of the common UN compound in the capital).

5. Improving management: The Somalia COP makes provision for deployment and presence of international staff on the ground in Somalia at a rate of substantive increase as compared to what has been the case so far. The Branch Office is devolving its current programme and financial management of the Puntland operation and delegating the authority to the proposed created Sub-Office in Garowe, which will be in charge of the entire zone with two Field Units in Galkayo and Bossasso (already existing). Thus, the financial and programme functions of the Garowe office are proposed to be strengthened. This will free the capacity of the existing P-3 Programme Officer post at the BO for transfer to Mogadishu, the security permitting, to kick start the reintegration programme in the primary returnee areas as well as to ensure synergies with the IDP interventions, in preparation for large scale voluntary repatriation in 2009 and beyond. Similarly, the P3 Protection Officer post is being transferred to Mogadishu, leaving the two P4 positions in programme and protection at the BO for the purposes of cluster work coordination and overall management, plus to ensure all necessary support for the field operations. The Mogadishu office, until a complete relocation of the Somalia Representation there, will be headed by a P5 Deputy Representative – Operations (under the SB programme) to match the seniority of other UN agencies' staff to be deployed in the capital. Provisions are also proposed made for enhancing the national staffing levels and numbers in Mogadishu. In preparations for the returns from Kenya, a new Field Office in Kismayo, a strategic location in the primary returnee region of the Jubas is proposed to be re-opened if not already done in 2007 (UNHCR closed its office there in the 1990s) and a small Field Unit is proposed to be established closer to the Kenyan border to monitor the cross border movements and to inform the programming and protection work. The final location of this office will be determined by developments on the ground and based on coordination and consultations with other sister UN agencies.

In both *Somaliland* and *Puntland*, engagement on RSD and eligibility activities, as well as on the issue of mixed migration flows, is proposed to be enhanced, both through regular posts creation as this is our mandated responsibility, and through the continued utilisation of UNVs.